

# The Icelandic Canadian

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## THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

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## Editorial

# SON OF ICELAND

The guest speaker at the Annual Concert of the Icelandic Canadian Club on February 23rd, 1954, was Byron Ingemar Johnson, former Premier of the province of British Columbia. He has the honor and distinction of being the first Canadian of Icelandic descent to hold the highest office in the gift of the people of a province of Canada. The main part of Mr. Johnson's address appears elsewhere in this number of the magazine and requires no comment. But his presence in Winnipeg at one of these annual concerts, the press and radio publicity and his personal attitude so clearly stated in his more intimate remarks on and off the platform, do well deserve some comment.

The moment the executive of The Men's Canadian Club of Winnipeg learned that the former Premier of British Columbia was coming to Winnipeg he was invited to address their Club. Beside him at the head table was Hon. D. L. Campbell, the Premier of the province of Manitoba. Four Icelanders were asked to sit at the head table and one of them moved the vote of thanks to the speaker.

The day before the concert a complimentary luncheon was tendered to the honoured guest at the Fort Garry Hotel. It was attended by thirty-five representatives of the religious, educational, professional and business elements of the Icelandic Canadian group in Winnipeg, including the presidents of the three official organizations, The

Icelandic National League, the Icelandic Canadian Club and the Leif Eiriksson Club. Four invited guests, including Asmundur Loptson, the Liberal Leader in Saskatchewan, unfortunately were unable to attend.

At the concert which, as Mr. Johnson in his delightful modesty admitted was not staged exclusively to hear him, he prefaced his address by some personal remarks in which he disclosed his feelings towards the national group of which he is a part. At the same time he recalled the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, held in London in 1948, which he attended as the representative of British Columbia. He, in a line of other representatives of the Nations of the Commonwealth, was presented to Their Majesties the late King George the Sixth and Queen Elizabeth, now the Queen Mother. He felt justly proud when the former Queen engaged him in conversation and stated how delighted Their Majesties were to meet representatives of Canada and her people.

But to Byron the most enjoyable part of the concert was downstairs in the church parlor where light refreshments were served consisting of Icelandic dishes and coffee. There he had a chance to roam around and chat to all and sundry in the most friendly personal way.

During Mr. Johnson's stay in Winnipeg he was interviewed by both the daily newspapers and detailed reports appeared in the press. Appropriate

radio announcements were made from time to time.

But the outstanding incident or one might say the most significant disclosure brought about by the visit, was an editorial in the Winnipeg Free Press. It is a gem which must not be tarnished by random comment and is re-published in full.

### "SON OF ICELAND"

Canada is today, and will be for some generations to come, a nation of immigrants. Millions of us look back, either directly or through memories of fireside tales and family traditions, to other lands and other customs. Time will change all this and a Canadian will someday be simply a Canadian, as a Frenchman is today a Frenchman or an Icelander an Icelander.

But if this period of hyphenated Canadianism is a passing phase, that is no reason to hurry it along. The fixed pattern of the future Canadian's character is being formed now, out of a hundred strands of national cultures, each contributing new strength and richness to our own culture, each cherished with a quite proper pride and jealousy by the immigrant; sometimes even by the immigrant three or four generations removed.

The Icelandic people of Winnipeg are looking forward to hearing Mr. Byron Johnson at their annual concert on Tuesday because they know that he is a good speaker and that he has made notable contributions to Canada: as a professional lacrosse player, as a member of the Royal Air Force in the First World War, as an industrialist and as Premier of British Columbia. But they are proud of him because he has done these things as the son of parents who came from Iceland to be Canadians.

In his middle name, Ingemar, Mr. Johnson carries the badge of his heritage."

° ° °

Byron Ingemar Johnson has visited us and gone back to his native province. What he said and did has made it abundantly clear how he thinks and feels. He is proud of two things which he expressed in such few but meaningful words:

"I am the son of Icelandic immigrants".

"I am a Canadian".

It was the irony of fate that the writer of the editorial, a Canadian of non-Icelandic descent, should give it the title: "Son of Iceland". The editorial was not initialed but one has reason to believe that it was written by the son of a distinguished Canadian journalist, Thomas B. Robertson, born in Glasgow, of Scottish-Ulster descent, widely known as "T.B.R.", who at the time of his death in 1936 was assistant editor-in-chief of the Winnipeg Free Press. If the surmise is correct it is not difficult to understand that in Byron Johnson and himself the son could see a confluence of national streams.

Destiny decreed that Byron Johnson, as many other children of immigrants, should lose contact with the group of his ethnic origin with the inevitable result that he soon forgot the language he learned on his mother's knee. But still, and even though Byron Johnson was born in Canada, the phrase "Son of Iceland" was appropriate and as indicated in the editorial can be extended further. It can apply to children whose parents were born in Canada, parents who know very little if any Icelandic themselves and could not attempt to teach the language to their children.

This extended and fully warranted use of the word "son" in relation to the country from which a Canadian has sprung, even though it be two or three generations back, is not without precedent. There are the Sons of Norway in the United States and here in Canada many a Canadian likes to be called a Son of Scotland or Son of England even though the Canadian birth goes back a generation or two.

The primary loyalty to Canada of these "sons" of the lands of their origin no one doubts. Nor does anyone criticise them for retaining a measure of attachment to the lands of their fathers. It helps to focus attention on the fact, inexorable but yet fortunate, that here in Canada a great nation is being moulded with qualities and characteristics rapidly becoming clear and distinct.

The national groups themselves, "strands of national cultures, each contributing strength and richness to our own" are the benefactors when top level men, who may appear to have been

completely merged in the Canadian mould, are at times referred to as the "sons" of the lands whence their forebears came. These men do much in building the prestige of their groups and because of the very fact that they, through inherent worth, have become national figures the groups of which they are a part become the more widely known and rise in general appraisal.

The Icelandic people of Winnipeg, and indeed elsewhere, are indebted to Byron Johnson for the visit. He would readily agree that it is not an exaggeration to say that both have benefited.

There are many other "Sons of Iceland" in Canada and the United States, who by their actions and achievements though not by the tongue they speak, are helping to draw attention to the Icelandic people and their language. They contribute their full share to the lustre of the Icelandic strand in the Canadian and the American national fabrics.

W. J. L.





## THE FRONT COVER VERSE

The verse on the front cover is from a poem by Bjarni Thorarensen, translated by Dr. Vilhjálmur Stefánsson. It is selected primarily as an illustration of the metre in the first and some of the other poems of the Elder Edda (*Sæmundar Edda hins fróða*). In referring to that first poem, "Völuspá" (The Sybil's Prophecy), Edmund Gosse, an Englishman of letters, who at the turn of the century was librarian to the House of Lords, says:

"The charm and solemn beauty of the style are irresistible and we are constrained to listen and revere, as if we were the auditors of some fugual music and long-buried deity. The melodies of this earliest Icelandic

verse, elaborate in their extreme and severe simplicity, are wholly rhythmical and alliterative, and return upon themselves like a solemn incantation."

The magazine hopes to be able to quote from "Völuspá" in future issues.

Bjarni Thorarensen was one of the early nineteenth century poets of Iceland. The original of the translated stanza is:

"Hver ríður svo geyst  
á gullinbrúvu,  
hávan of hifin,  
hesti snálitum,  
hnálega hristanda  
hríngan makka,  
eldi hreifanda  
undan stálsköflum?

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## IN THE EDITOR'S CONFIDENCE

According to the Bard,

"The best laid schemes o' mice an' men  
Gang aft a-gley".

The Icelandic Canadian finds itself in the same position as 'mice an' men'. It has been stated in a previous editorial that the spring issue would feature Icelandic contacts along the Atlantic seaboard, and westward to the Great Lakes in the north and to the Mississippi in the south. Due in part to circumstances over which we had little control and in part to the Chairman's inexperience, the only article dealing with eastern matters is, "What Makes Toronto Tick?" by J. Ragnar Johnson, Q.C. which was received early in February.

An unforeseen flood of good material, much of which would have become dated if deferred, arrived during the latter part of February. This

together with material postponed from our previous issue far exceeded our capacity to publish in one issue, limited as we are by financial considerations to approximately forty pages of reading matter.

Accordingly, with the gracious consent of its authors, fine articles by Mrs. Svanhvit Josie of Baltimore, Rev V. Emil Gudmundson of Ellsworth, Maine, Dr. Stefan Einarsson of Baltimore, Miss Dolores Randall of Seattle, and Dr. Tryggvi J. Oleson of Winnipeg must await our next publication. In effect, our original plan to feature the East has been deferred until the summer issue of our magazine.

The Editorial Board is deeply appreciative of the time and effort expended by the aforementioned contributors, whose 'labor of love' assures our readers of an interesting summer issue.

A. V.

## *Thoughts of a Canadian*

An address delivered by **BYRON INGIMAR JOHNSON**, at a concert under the auspices of The Icelandic Canadian Club held in the First Lutheran Church in Winnipeg on Tuesday, February 23, 1954.



**Byron I. Johnson**

While I was Premier of British Columbia I received an invitation from the Liberal Club of the University of British Columbia to address a meeting of their club. I went to the University shortly before noon; was met by the President of the Liberal Club and spent some time talking with him and a few of the Club's members. As time went on I began to wonder when I was to meet the other members of the group. I hoped, inwardly, we would have a reasonable number of students in the University who were supporters of the Liberal Party. I had expected there would be thirty or forty at the meeting and that we could sit around and have a friendly discussion. At 12.30 the President suggested we should go over to the meeting hall,

which was in the auditorium. When I walked on to the platform I was amazed to see every seat taken, and students standing around the entire auditorium. There were more than twelve hundred present. It then dawned on me that I was to address an open meeting of the student body. Although I had not prepared a speech for the occasion, I was naturally, delighted that so many of the students had taken a part of their lunch hour to listen to their Premier. In my opening remarks I mentioned that I had been asked to address the members of the Liberal Club of the University and was delighted to see such a large membership. That was as far as I got. The large gathering let me know that there were many varied views of political thought at that meeting—which is as it should be. However, I had a most delightful hour with the students.

The reason I mention this incident is that my presence here to-day is due to the fact that my good friend, Judge Lindal, was kind enough to invite me to come to Winnipeg to address the Icelandic Canadian Club—an invitation I was delighted to accept. And as a result of accepting that invitation I received an invitation to address the Men's Canadian Club of Winnipeg.

As you know, I am of Icelandic descent. My father came to Canada as an immigrant in 1881, lived in Winnipeg two years and then went west—through the northern States to Portland, up the coast to the beautiful city of Victoria where he settled in 1883.

Later my mother came to Canada as an immigrant from Iceland, worked in Winnipeg, moved on to Victoria where she met and married my father. I have purposely given you this sketch of my background so you will understand—at least to the extent that I can find words to express it, why I am so proud of the fact that I am a Canadian.

In May of 1951 I was privileged to attend Convocation at the University of British Columbia, and to hear a distinguished Canadian, Bruce Hutchinson, an outstanding Canadian author, Editor of the *Victoria Times*, and I believe a contributor to the *Winnipeg Free Press*, give the convocation address. Speaking of Canada he said, in part, "I do not mean the obvious resources, wealth, and economic opportunity of this country. They alone could not begin to provide an estate to satisfy the needs of an educated man. No, your heritage is something too large to be measured in money, and among the nations on this continent it is unequaled and unique.

"Like all important things it has no name, it is quite intangible, and must endure forever unalterable in your heart. But indefinable and nameless as it will remain, we may call it the chance to take a new country, as yet molten in an unshaped mould, and to shape it in a fashion never seen among men before. At the world's present age that is a chance granted to few and granted to none with such rich opportunity and wide scope as to Canadians.

"What is this Canadian thing? Half a continent of treasure, a high standard of living—that most unreliable of all measurements—two races demonstrating that men of different origins may live in peace together? All that

but so much more. Then what is this thing we call Canada?"

One can rightly ask the question, What is this thing we call Canada?

If I think out loud for a few moments they will be the thoughts of a boy, the son of parents who were immigrants, as he attended Sunday School, public school, played with other youngsters on sand lots . . . and play fields, took part in group games, played on the school football, lacrosse and basketball teams, and later represented his city in its rugby, lacrosse, baseball and basketball teams. What did this boy experience in his growing years? He experienced a deep respect for the people of the community in which he lived—a tolerant people whose main object in life seemed to be to do everything they could to assimilate into the life of the community all those who came into it to live, whether they be Jew or Gentile, Negro or Asiatic, Protestant or Roman Catholic. This trait of the Canadian people—brought to our country by pioneers who sought liberty and freedom, which was an inherent part of their beings, and also the opportunity to improve the position of themselves and their families, in keeping with the effort they put into their task, is, as I see it, the main foundation, or cornerstone of this thing we call Canada. A God-fearing, tolerant, law-abiding, and hard-working people built a solid foundation on which we see the Canada of to-day being reared. And now, looking back over fifty years, I can say that the foundation so well laid by those who pioneered our Canada is still intact, and even though our country is passing through the greatest industrial expansion of its history, we Canadians go on our way taking in our stride the tremendous development

which is going on. Staunch believers in private enterprise as the vehicle to carry on the business of our country, we see in this phase of our economy the expression of the spirit of those who pioneered our land—a desire to improve our position according to the effort we put into our task, and the feeling of independence which accompanies it, and yet, not only are our people willing, but have a real desire, to have our governments, at all levels, provide proper facilities for education, hospitals, under-privileged people, old-age pensioners, and for welfare cases. Here is what the boy to whom I referred saw in the community in which he lived fifty years ago—a tolerant, law-abiding people, a real community spirit, and not only a willingness but a desire on the part of the people to give a helping hand to those in need. In the social legislation which is on our Statutes, at all levels of government in Canada, we see implemented that side of our pioneers—the helping hand. So I say, Mr. President, there hasn't been much change in the attitude of the Canadian people.

I am sure, Mr. President, in speaking as the son of immigrant parents to the Canadian Club of a city which has a blending of nationals from all parts of the world, my observation will be understood when I say I am proud I am a Canadian.

Yes, Mr. President, a great responsibility is in the hands of the Canadian people. What are we doing about it? I remember quite well the general election of 1911—I lacked by a few months the age required to vote. How I would have voted has no bearing on what I am going to say. One of the deepest impressions left on my mind of that election is a statement made by Sir Wilfred Laurier when he said the

“Twentieth Century belongs to Canada”. I remember the uncertainty of the period prior to the first World War, I recall—after serving overseas in the first World War and returning to my home in Victoria—that opportunities for employment were few and that many of our young people migrated to the United States. Then the worldwide depression in the 30's—the Second World War, in which our Canada played a glorious part; then peace, followed by a period of reconstruction. Throughout all these trying times the people of Canada kept their feet on the ground. Looking back over the first half of the “Century which belongs to Canada”, one has not seen the fulfilment of Sir Wilfred's prophecy, at least, not until the last few years of that period, when Canada really started to come into her own. Although I know what I am about to say is known to all in this room, let me review briefly the shape of the mould we as Canadians are shaping for the development of our country:

1. We have added a tenth province. Newfoundland, guarding as it does the entrance to the St. Lawrence, is a must from the defence point of view. Her people have the good fortune of being not only Newfoundlanders but also Canadians, and Canada has the opportunity of assisting in developing Newfoundland's rich resources and assisting in raising the standard of living of the people of that Province.

2. Development of iron ore deposits in Quebec and Labrador.

3. The St. Lawrence Waterway and increased power available at sites on the waterway—more important value of deepsea shipping ports at Lakehead.

4. Construction of inter-provincial



oil pipe-line through which Canadian oil flows from Alberta to Canadian refineries in Ontario and Quebec.

5. Proposed construction of all-Canadian natural gas pipe-lines from Alberta to Eastern Canada.

6. Further search for gas and oil in all the Prairie Provinces.

7. Construction of Trans-Mountain oil pipe-line from Alberta to B.C.'s lower mainland and the State of Washington, and large increase in the refining capacity in the lower Mainland area of B. C.

8. Vast aluminum development at Kitimat. It is estimated that when completed it will involve an expenditure of between five and six hundred million dollars, including a power development of 1,600,000 firm horse power.

9. Development of natural gas and oil in the Peace River and the Yukon.

10 Proposed natural gas pipe-line from the Peace River section through the middle of B. C. to the lower Mainland and across the border to Washington, Oregon, and possibly California.

11. Proposed development of power facilities provided by the Yukon River and the lakes in that area. Alternative proposals by American and Canadian interests comparable to the development at Kitimat.

12. Construction of new pulp and paper plants, and the use of waste in our forests and mills in pulp and paper mills across Canada.

These are only some of the immense projects which have been completed or are in the planning stage. Millions—yes, billions are being invested in capital expenditures which will provide benefits to every part of Canada.

Yes, Mr. President, the pattern of the mould is clearly discernible in the industrial development which is going on across Canada. Also we have a continued growth in the great basic industries—agriculture, mining, fishing, lumber, and increased power development, to meet the needs of an expanding population and of expanding industry.

Apart from the fact that our country is full to the brim with undeveloped natural resources, what is the basis of the immense expansion which is taking place in our country? What other contributing factors are there behind this phenomenal development in Canada? I think, Mr. President, I will not transgress the bounds of propriety at a public gathering such as this when I say it is my belief that the main contributing factor, apart from great natural wealth, has been the stability in government which Canada has enjoyed throughout all the years since Confederation—governments led by Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir Wilfred Laurier, Sir Robert Borden, Arthur Meighen, R. B. Bennett, W. L. Mackenzie King—and now, by our distinguished Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Louis S. St. Laurent. He is doing a magnificent public relations job on the international level, in his trip around the world. Just now he is in India, the guest of Prime Minister Nehru. Today the press reports his speech to the Indian parliament—how well he expressed our thoughts as Canadians. No matter where one travels—in the United States, United Kingdom or on the Continent, the name of Canada stands high. In 1948 I was privileged to attend the Empire Parliamentary Conference in London. After the Conference I travelled to Holland and Belgium with a group composed of



people from all parts of the Commonwealth. Everywhere we went the fact I was introduced as a Canadian always brought forth expressions—almost to the point of embarrassment—of the high regard in which Canada and Canadians are held. Who is there in this audience who has not thrilled inwardly when he has read in the newspaper or heard over the radio speeches made in the United States, London, Paris or in other parts of the Commonwealth by those we have elected as our representatives in Parliament? Yes, Mr. President, we see in the policies of the governments that have represented the people of Canada expressions of the will of the people of our country. Our laws, too, express the will of those who pioneered our country—laws to preserve law and order; laws designed to encourage investment in our industries. I think that in no other country in the world is there a greater respect for law and order than we have in Canada—labour laws protecting those who work in our industries—laws on social legislation which, in my opinion, equal, if not surpass, any country in the world.

Yes, it is well the people of Canada kept their feet on the ground during the very difficult years in the first half of the 20th century—the century which Sir Wilfred said belongs to Canada. Nothing is standing our country in better stead to-day than the confidence which the people of Canada have created for themselves in all parts of the world. Millions, yes, billions of dollars are pouring into Canada for investment in our basic and secondary industries, and I think I am safe in saying that we Canadians are investing in our own country to a greater extent than at any time in our history. Yes, Mr. President, again I

say with pride, "I am a Canadian".

Before I conclude my remarks I would like to make a few observations about what has gone on during the post-war period in the Province which I know so well—the great province of British Columbia.

May I first review what has happened in the way of increase in population during the ten-year period covered by the last census. The increase in population in British Columbia was 42%, and for comparative purposes, the increase on a percentage basis was, Alberta 20%, Ontario 20%, and Quebec 20%, with a Dominion average of under 20%. This Mr. President, will give you some idea of the expansion which has taken place in B. C. Figures for the States to the south of B.C., on the Pacific indicate that for a comparable period California had a 50% increase, Oregon and Washington, with approximately 40%, so that now there is a population of approximately 16 million people living on the Pacific Coast of the U.S., and Canada. In land area B. C. is equal to Washington, Oregon and California combined. The population, in round figures, of California is 10,665,000, Oregon, 1,700,000, Washington, 2,500,000 — a total of 14,865,000 and B. C., 1,200,000. The whole Pacific Coast is moving ahead at a terrific rate. It is pleasant to know that B. C. is keeping pace with our friendly States to the south. I felt it might be of interest to know how B. C. is maintaining this terrific increase in population. The answer must, of course, lie in employment, much of which has been provided by large investments in the development of our natural resources. Most spectacular of these is the Aluminum Company development at Kitimat—forty miles south of Prince Rupert. The first

phase of this vast development is nearing completion. A production of 80,000 tons of aluminum a year, starting this year, is anticipated with the completion of this first phase. One part of this development was the construction of a vast dam across the Nechako River, backing water up into a chain of lakes in this high plateau; driving a tunnel ten miles long and twenty feet across down through the mountain to Kemano, where a powerhouse is being built in a large excavation in the side of the mountain. Here will be located the generators which will produce—when the maximum of this development is achieved—1,600,000 firm horse power. The smelters and town-site will be at Kitimat at sea level where an entirely new town has been laid out and is under construction. A railroad is being constructed from Terrace to Kitimat—a distance of forty miles—to connect this vast development with the C.N.R. This project—the Aluminum Co.,—has, in itself, had a very large bearing on the employment provided for people moving to British Columbia—two or three thousand people working on the site over the past three years, and the general employment in machine shops, supply firms, shipping companies located on the lower Mainland have made a large contribution to the economic life of the Province. This is one of those projects which staggers the imagination. And as one, who as Premier of the Province, was close enough to see the planning, the vision and the courage required to tackle such a large project, I may make the observation that it is fortunate for Canada we have in our country—in our industries—men with the courage shown by Mr. Powell, President of the Aluminum Co., and his very able Vice-President, Mr. Mc-

Neely DuBoise, who, I believe, was the spark-plug in planning and bringing to its present position this vast industrial development.

In a matter of months people will be living in a well laid out town, probably about five or six thousand people, with about one thousand workers in the smelters. Where a wilderness stood four years ago, a modern city is in the making, and a great industrial development is well on its way.

Already plans are being made for the construction of a large pulp and paper plant at Kitimat in which one of our well-known companies, the Powell River Co., is joining hands with the Aluminum Co. Cheap power and large stands of timber in the area provide the setting for this proposed development, and with such an experienced and well-managed company in the newsprint field as the Powell River Co., in partnership with the Aluminum Co., it seems reasonable to expect that this project will go ahead.

Second only to Aluminum in the new investments during the past few years are pulp and paper projects, totalling 225 million dollars—more than four times their value ten years ago. Included in these projects are Harmac pulp plant of the H. R. MacMillan Co., at Nanaimo. This plant was started in 1947. When completed it operated on a 250 ton a day basis. Then the plant capacity was more than doubled and is now operating at full capacity. This was the first plant built to operate entirely on waste from lumber mills and from logs which were unsuitable for lumber. Also on Vancouver Island a newsprint plant was constructed at Duncan Bay near Campbell River. It is now in operation and produces 230 tons of newsprint a

day. At Port Alberni the Bloedel interests increased the capacity of their pulp plant. In the making are two new pulp plants on Vancouver Island, one at Duncan Bay, adjoining the newsprint plant, and a new development, a pulp plant, on the east coast of the Island between Victoria and Nanaimo, owned by the B. C. Forest Products—another mill to use mill and forest waste. At Prince Rupert there is a new plant built by Columbia Cellulose which produces 70,000 tons annually of high-grade cellulose pulp for shipment to rayon mills of the U.S. and Canada. May I observe here that on a visit to this plant about two years ago I met four fine young men who were employed at the plant. When I asked them where they were from, they replied, "Manitoba". Your loss is B. C.'s gain. We need young men of that type to help to develop our Province.

Most spectacular of the projects planned is the laying of a cable under the sea to the Mainland to Vancouver Island to take care of the ever-increasing demand for power on Vancouver Island. The underwater circuit will consist of four separate cables—three for normal operation, the other as a spare. By midsummer of 1956, 132,000 volts of electric power—enough to light two million sixty-watt bulbs—will be flashing through a cable on the sea floor of the Gulf of Georgia to link Vancouver Island to the company's Mainland system.

The construction of the Trans-Mountain Oil Pipeline from Alberta to the Lower Mainland of B. C. is completed. This will carry oil from Alberta to the Lower Mainland of B. C., and to two new refineries being constructed in the State of Washington. As a result of this development a new refinery is under construction at Kam-

loops. The Imperial Oil Co. has a completed construction of a new refinery at IOCO, and Shell and Standard Oil Companies are increasing the capacity of their refineries at Burnaby.

Announcement has just been made of the shipment by The Imperial Oil Co. of four and a half million gallons of gasoline, to Japan—the first of its kind in the history of Canada.

In addition we have the prospects of a pipe-line to carry natural gas from the Peace River area of British Columbia and Northern Alberta down through the centre of B. C., to the Lower Mainland and to the States of Washington and Oregon. This project will cost in the neighbourhood of 113 million dollars.

There are many other projects under consideration—the development of power in the northeastern part of the Province and the adjoining Yukon Territory; the proposed Celgar Development in the Kootenays. Time does not permit a further review. However, I am safe in saying that B. C. is maintaining its position with the rest of Canada in moving ahead at a very fast gait.

In concluding my remarks, Mr. President, I feel that Canada will continue to move ahead at a high rate. Much will depend on ourselves, whether we be those who labour in industry or those who have the responsibility to direct our industries. There must be a realization by all that we have entered a more competitive era than the one we have enjoyed during the post-war years—lower prices in world markets, the difficulty many of our best customers of previous years are experiencing in the way of shortage of dollars create a real problem for Canadians. Looking back over the period which I have hurriedly reviewed to-

night we can find plenty of precedent to prove that Canadians can meet any set of circumstances with which they may be faced. Part of the answer lies in increased production without increasing our costs—a willingness of industry to improve our plants and accept a reasonable profit for their part and a willingness on our part to buy in the markets in which we sell. Along with this there is something that not only can be said but should be emphasized at a meeting of this kind—the need of a greater interest in public affairs. A well-informed public opinion is one of the finest assets we can

possess—that is a responsibility of every Canadian citizen, and it is my belief that this can best be accomplished by all our citizens taking an active part in the party of their choice and helping to guide it on its way. That is our right as Canadians. The extent to which we accept that responsibility will have a great bearing on the future of our country.

Now, Mr. President, I want to thank you and your members for your very courteous hearing, and may I conclude by again saying with pride—I am a Canadian.

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## New Curling and Hockey Rink Built at Lundar

The pioneers have often been extolled, and deservedly so, for their community spirit. That their priority in this characteristic does not amount to a monopoly was demonstrated at Lundar, Man., when a combination hockey and curling rink was constructed under the sponsorship of the Grettir Amateur Athletic Association. Funds to pay for the materials in the building have been accumulating for the past two or three years, raised chiefly by personal contributions. Construction of the building was accomplished through the summer, almost entirely by voluntary effort. While the men did the heavy work, the women stood by and kept them supplied with coffee and food.

The arena was officially opened December 11th, with a ceremony dedicating it to the memory of the district's casualties of two world wars. Their names were read at the opening

ceremony by Mrs. O. F. Eyolfson, a past president of the Lundar Ladies Auxiliary. Wreaths were placed at the Legion Cross by Mrs. B. Loftson, representing mothers of soldiers who lost their lives; by Ingolfur Lindal, representing the Lundar Legion; by Mrs. Oscar Arnason, president of the Lundar Ladies Auxiliary to the Canadian Legion; and by Dr. G. Paulson, president of the Grettir Club.

A program of speeches followed, featuring representatives of the Manitoba Amateur Hockey Association along with local dignitaries. Members of the Winnipeg Winter Club gave a demonstration of fancy skating, and a hockey game was played by a combination of players from Lundar, Eriksdale, Clarkleigh and Oak Point. The evening's festivities were brought to a close with a dance in the community hall.



## *Musical Icelanders in Seattle*

by SOPHIE WALLACE



Sophie Wallace

Strangers in a large city often seek solace in a church. It was our good fortune to find Calvary Lutheran Church in Seattle which supplied our needs for both good friends and inspired music.

My husband and I arrived at this scenic coastal city the summer of 1948. We made a brief debut at Silver Lake, 20 miles from Seattle during the day that the Annual Icelandic Celebration was in progress. While there, we were invited to attend church service the following Sunday.

Neither the age of the edifice nor its need for paint could blind our eyes to the radiance that shone from within. We met so many ex-Winnipeggers or "stubble-jumpers" as we called ourselves, that we quickly felt right at home. This warm feeling was made more impressive when set to the very musical work of the choir.

Choral work was the essence of our musical training in Winnipeg. There-

fore, it was natural for us to observe the choir very closely. Certain features stood out then and have continued to amaze us. This congregation, though relatively small (approximately 200 members) could boast of a choir consisting of 30 mature participants, many of whom are outstanding soloists. Another unique aspect was the quality of anthems chosen for Sunday services. Noteworthy too, was the warm welcome accorded us . . . to join them. We did just that, at the first opportunity.

Having joined the church, its history was revealed to us. About the turn of the century, a number of Icelandic families came from the prairies of Canada, also the Dakotas and Minnesota. Most of them located in the suburb of Ballard, where some families of Icelanders had lived prior to the big Seattle fire in 1889. A meeting place became a necessity. Therefore, on November 4, 1900, they founded the literary society, "Vestri", which even today meets regularly, speaks only the beautiful mother tongue, and re-enacts many cultures developed by our forefathers.

Likewise, the need for a church was felt. Visiting pastors supplied the early requirements. Later, when the church was re-organized in 1925, more permanent pastors served the community. These were among them: the late Rev. J. A. Sigurðsson, Rev. Kolbeinn Simundson, Dr. Rúnólfur Marteinsson, Rev. K. K. Olafsson, Rev. Harald Sigmar, Rev. Eric Sigmar, and Rev. S. O. Thorlakson. Each of these gifted men has left "His imprint in the sod".



Parallel to the church development was the growth of the Choir. Forty years ago the lyric-minded Icelanders formed a Glee Club. This, was the nucleus of the first church choir. We are indebted to Gunnar Matthiason, a baritone, now of Los Angeles; the late Jacob Bjarnason, a basso profundo, also called the "Singing Cop" because he was a police officer; Sigurður Helgason, a tenor, musician and composer, now in Blaine, who is credited with the organizing of the first brass band in Ballard; the late Alfred Alberts, who organized the musical programs for the Icelandic Celebrations; K. F. Frederick, an original Glee Club member and today's President of the Congregation; lastly, Tani Bjornson, our present well-known director. These men and others who have capably guided the destiny of the choir are a credit to the Icelandic heritage.

Working loyally with these men through the years were many musical women. Dependability is essential if desirable results are to be obtained. One unforgettable example of this was set by the late Mrs. Mary S. Frederick (nee Sumarliðason) who was with the choir for over four decades. Other ladies, too, have contributed measurably through the years.

Inspiration was a natural creation of such examples. In the 30's the young church members revealed their desire to contribute to the choir activities. They are now the mature performers of our well-known choir. It has grown in quantity and quality under the dynamic leadership of Mr. Bjornson. He is the ideal church choir director. A gifted voice with operatic experience, "the patience of Job", unequalled fidelity, are all combined in him. For twelve years he has guided

this group to its present high calibre of performance.

Many other talented people have materially assisted the choir in the past and in the present. To mention only a few is imperative: Ben Hallgrimson, M.A. in Music, violinist, and a fine basso; Victor Palmason, violinist and tenor; Elaine Vorhaus (nee Frederick), graduate of the Juillard School of Music, N. York, and her brother Richard Frederick, soprano and tenor solo voices. Then there are Mrs. Victoria Johnson (nee Palmason), Edna Dolan (nee Johnson), Erika Eastvold (nee Thorlakson), organists and pianists; Mrs. Kristin Simpson (nee Sumarliðason), harpist; Mrs. Kristin Smedvick, (nee Jonasson), violinist with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra; Mrs. Henrietta Mastenbrook, our present organist, all of whom either have or are generously aiding the choir.

There are many others whose loyal and self-sacrificing work with the choir is outstanding at the present time. One of these is Dr. Edward Palmason, physician, whose ethereal tenor voice is in great demand all over the city. He has sung leads with various choral groups, operatic works, as well as the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. His voice is truly a great addition to our choir.

Another family with its branches contributing musically to our church is the Thorlakson-Sigmar combination. They are well known as are their talents. Our pastor, Eric Sigmar, on leave in Iceland with his wife, Svava, are both soloists and choir members also.

The popularity of this choir has increased during the last three or four years. In addition to their annual church concerts and trips to Blaine

and Vancouver, they have sung on the radio viz, "Voices of the Northwest", a thirty minute program; also on television last December, "And Give Thee Peace", quarter hour show. Both were well received and highly praised.

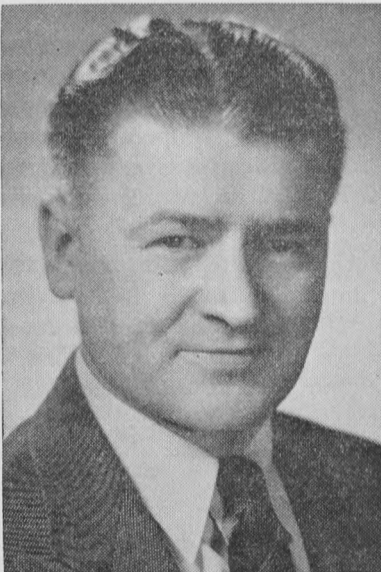
Why is this choir so well united? One of the reasons lies in the fact that there are eleven married couples among the active members. This observation was made by our ex-pastor, Harald Sigmar. On the same occasion he compared the three national anthems sung by the choir "O Canada" "O, Guð vors lands", and "The Star Spangled Banner", as to which one thrilled him the most. He and his wife both chose "O, Guð vors lands". Here we see another unifying factor, namely, their bi-lingual ability. When the occasion requires Icelandic, then it is used, whether it be a hymn, an anthem, or a folk song.

The expression "Work and play don't mix" can here be questioned. One of the interesting and pleasant

means used by the choir to raise funds is by sponsoring University play productions. Money raised in this way and others has made it possible for the choir not only to add to the church fund, but substantially aid in the purchase of new gowns and a very fine Wurlitzer organ. Thus, singing is not only a pleasure under Tani's direction, but a profitable pleasure too.

As the wings are to the birds, so is the choir to the church. Together they can soar to great heights. Having amassed such musical talents, we can look forward to the continued success of this Icelandic church and its choir.

**Sophie Wallace**, born in Piney Manitoba. Parents: Mrs. Arndis Olafson, of Seattle, Washington, and the late Olafur Olafson. Brought up in Selkirk, Manitoba. Graduated from the Devonshire Collegiate Institute, Selkirk, and the Winnipeg Normal School. Well-known as an outstanding teacher in Selkirk and Winnipeg. Actively engaged in athletic, musical, and dramatic work. Married Dr. Thomas M. Wallace, presently practicing in Seattle, Washington. Has two sons: Michael, 4 years old, and Garth two.

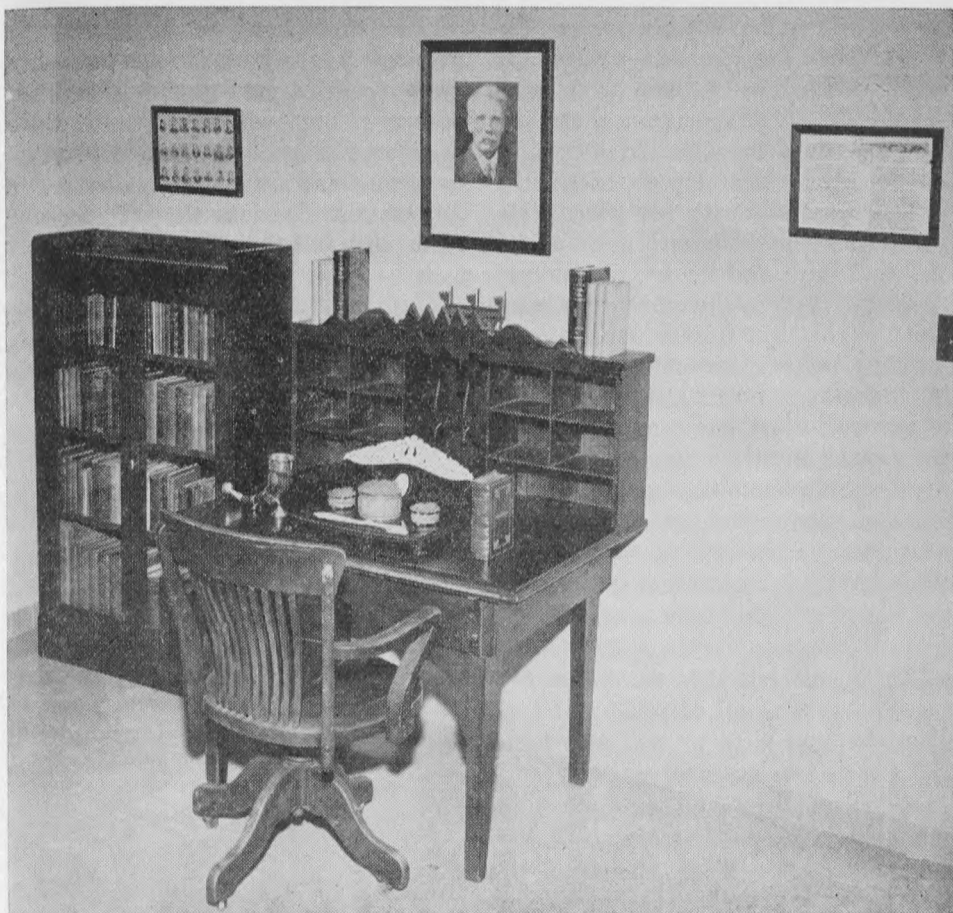


**Sigurdur Sigmundson**

## PLANNING STREET RAILWAY SYSTEM IN BRAZIL

**Sigurdur Sigmundson**, transportation manager for the B. C. Electric Co. in Vancouver was recently sent to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he will act on a committee to lay out the street railway system in that city, on behalf of the Brazilian Traction Co. He left in February and will be about two months away from home. President of the Canadian Tarnsit Association, Mr. Sigmundson recently completed a course at Harvard University in Advanced Business Administration.

Before leaving Winnipeg several years ago, Soggi was an active member and president of the Icelandic Canadian Club, and his many friends here note his progress with pride.



## *The Stephan G. Stephansson's Mementos*

in the Icelandic Reading Room of the University of Manitoba Library.<sup>1</sup>

by FINNBOGI GUÐMUNDSSON

In his home in Alberta Stephan G. Stephansson had a little study of his own where he used to sit deep into the night writing poetry or letters to his many friends. This study he called "kompu" (den), his desk "púlt" (table), and the place where it stood, "hornið mitt" (my corner).

This poetic corner has now been transferred from Stephansson's farmstead to a permanent place here.

First we have his chair and desk, the

latter made about 60 years ago by one of Stephansson's neighbours, Jón Jónsson from Strönd. When Jónsson died Stephansson composed (in 1908) a very fine obituary poem to his friend.

In 1906 or thereabouts some of Stephansson's friends in Canada and the United States formed a group for

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<sup>1</sup>) A part of an address (here slightly changed), given at a gathering in the Icelandic Reading Room October 3rd, 1953, in memory of the centenary of Stephan G. Stephansson.

the purpose of having his poetry published. When the manuscript was ready late in 1908, one of them took it to Iceland to have it printed there. At the same time they invited Stephansson to travel through the Icelandic settlements and recite his poetry. He travelled for three months, got as far east as Duluth and held about twenty meetings. When he had returned home again, his friends sent him a keepsake, which we have here with us, a drinking horn. On receiving it he wrote a short letter to Eggert Jóhannsson, a former editor of the Winnipeg weekly 'Heimskringla', who had played a prominent part in the aforementioned activities. In translation the letter reads as follows:

Dear friend,

The 'horn' arrived last evening. My sincere thanks to all of you for it and all other good gifts, present and past. The horn is a treasure, skilfully and artistically made, as far as I am able to judge. Not least do I like the verse from the Lay of Sigurdriða. It is the most Christian drinking song I can recall, even though there are many good ones. I thought that at some time I might have to translate it to an English friend, unprepared so that I would stumble over it; hence I translated it immediately. Now you may smile at my English, but thus it runs:

Beer I bring you,  
 Bold warrior,  
 Brewage of good health  
 And greatest honor.  
 Fraught with sounding sounds,  
 Sorcery of kindness,  
 Magic of friendliness  
 And mirthful tokens."

This edition of his poetry appeared in 1909 and 1910, in three volumes,

called "Andvökur" (Wakeful Nights). The thirty-four friends who published these volumes had them beautifully bound in one, which they afterwards gave to the poet in appreciation of their pleasant association with him in this matter. To make the volume complete they all inscribed their names in it.

Both these precious things, the drinking horn and the presentation volume, are now being preserved here in the Library.

Stephansson's good friends were not confined to this continent. He also had many in Iceland, where his poetry had become widely known and had earned him a place in the hearts of the people. In 1917 a number of societies in Iceland jointly invited him to visit his native land.

For a while Stephansson seems to have feared that he would disappoint his good friends in Iceland and that he was unworthy of this honor. Eggert Jóhannsson at least, has felt that Stephansson needed some encouragement, as we can judge from the following words in one of his letters to Stephansson (here being translated): "Yes, I had heard about your contemplated trip to Iceland before I received your letter. And, believe me, I was glad for many reasons to hear this news and then to have it confirmed by you in your letter. The Icelanders, or the paternal nation, owe you much, no less than the Icelanders in America. None of the nation's poets has before or later given her as much of new and hitherto utterly unknown material, as you have done, the novelists as well as the lyrical poets included. All this you have accomplished without remuneration, had it as a hobby all your life, in the evenings and in the nights while nature demanded that you take a rest after



the toil of the day. When this is all considered, it can scarcely be that the master should assign scantier rations than that after 40 years of labour without payment his workman should be given a trip to the land which treasures his own history and memories as well as those of all Icelanders. If the nation does not owe you as much as this, if she does not owe you **more**, then she has not during her 1042 years of existence owed a penny to any man."

If Stephansson ever had any doubts about himself and the success on the trip, he was wrong. His journey was a procession of triumph, which brought him still closer to his old admirers in Iceland and acquired for him many new ones. Some of the poems he composed on the trip rank among his best.

He received many fine presents, of which we have one good example, a desk set, given to him by Skagafirðingar or the people of the county of Skagafjörður in the north of Iceland where he was born. The set was made by the artist, Stefán Eiríksson, in Reykjavík. The stand, the pen-holder, and the ruler are of ebony, the vessels or the **askar**, as we call them, are of Icelandic birch; and the paper cutter of whale-bone with a gold shield upon which appears the following inscription:

St. G. Stephansson,  
Skagafirðingur  
1917

As I said we call these vessels **askar**. The big one is used as an inkwell, but the others for pens, stamps, etc. But what strikes us, at least as Icelanders, is this, that the **askar** were in earlier days used as vessels for food. And it is an old saying in Icelandic, **að bókvitið verði ekki látið í askana**: that book learning will not fill the eating vessels. However that may be, the Ice-

landers never lived up to it, and that is perhaps one of the main reasons why they survived as a nation. As soon as they had felt that they could not afford the luxury of books, their spirit would have been daunted and the battle lost. Therefore, I think that the artist's idea of using the **askar** as he did, in making the desk set here under discussion, was a fitting challenge to the Icelanders on both sides of the ocean, a challenge at the dawn of the most materialistic age that the world has seen.

Of the three pictures you see on the wall, the one in the middle is of the poet himself, taken when he was about seventy and first published in the 4th volume of **Andvökur** in 1923. The one to the right (above the bookcase) is a composite picture, which used to hang beside Stephansson's desk, showing some Icelandic brother-poets and statesmen.

The third frame contains a half century old sprig of heather, from a place in Iceland where Stephansson stayed as a young lad. On receiving the heather (in a letter from a friend in Iceland) he composed a very fine poem entitled 'Lyng frá auðum æskustöðvum' (Heather from Abandoned Haunts of Childhood) which has here been beautifully written out and framed by Gissur Eliasson.

In the bookcase we have the greater part of Stephansson's books. He never had many, especially not in his earlier years. But he was an avid reader all his life and possessed a memory which was phenomenal. Much of the Icelandic literature that he had read as a young man in Iceland stayed with him all through his life. He was well versed in English as well as in Scandinavian literature, although there is in his poems little evidence of direct in-



fluence from these sources. But in his letters he often discusses at length ideas and passages from his readings.

In 1894 Stephansson gave a lecture, **On Reading Books**, at a meeting of a newly established Icelandic Reading Club in the Markerville district. I would like to end this short and somewhat disjointed account with a brief translated passage from this lecture:

"Three are those whom reading has educated, men who have not only acquired amusement and knowledge from books, but much rather sharpened and increased the power of their own spirits: have drunk spiritual strength from books as the grass drinks a spring shower. Of course, I realize that culture, thus understood, is not of much weight in the pocket, unrelated as it is to position and wealth; it can neither be weighed on a commercial scale nor told in gallons; there is some doubt that because of it you

will get more butter from the milk or dozens more eggs from the henhouse, since culture cannot be thus measured.

But one thing is certain: it makes man himself more suited for all useful undertakings, more human than if he had to do without it. It makes him more sensitive and keener for all that is beautiful and good, and connects him more closely and intimately with his race and nature. It interprets to him the runes of the past, explains the tongues of the present and shows him the future in a clearer vision. It prevents his life from becoming barren and isolated from everything like a rock which has rolled forth upon a grassy field and lies there motionless until it sinks into the earth. It prolongs the short life of man by ages, because the perception and sensitivity of a truly educated man reach far beyond the span of experience of any single generation."



C. P. Haltalin

A graduate of the University of Manitoba in Electrical Engineering, **Mr. C. P. Haltalin** has been with the Engineering Department of the Winnipeg Electric Company since 1929.

Prior to his present appointment he served as Assistant Electrical Engineer and Supervisory Engineer. As Manager of the Operating Division he is responsible for the operation and maintenance of all generation, transmission, and distribution facilities of Winnipeg Electric Company, as well as the power plants and transmission properties of The Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board.

By courtesy of PHASE



## ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**A. R. Swanson** has been appointed on the board of Directors of Burns & Denton Ltd., members of the Investment Dealers Association of Canada.

Mr. Swanson is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ragnar Swanson of St. Boniface, Man.

## Leona Oddstad Gordon Sings in Hawaii



**Leona Oddstad Gordon**

A Hawaiian Island November vacation with enough concert work to keep them in practice was "like a dream" for Leona Oddstad Gordon, lyric soprano, and her husband Marcus Gordon, concert pianist, of Berkley, California.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon were in Honolulu for two concerts during Thanksgiving week, performing with the Honolulu Symphony orchestra under the conductorship of George Barati, who is from San Francisco and an old friend of the Gordons. Besides having a wonderful holiday the Gordons found time for sunning at Waikiki Beach, and many interesting discussions on music with Mr. and Mrs. Barati.

Arriving early in November in Honolulu, the Gordons made their island debut in a semi-classical concert with the orchestra, Nov. 10. Mr. Gordon also played Nov. 22, and 24 with the Honolulu orchestra in its

regular winter series. According to Gordon "the orchestra here (in Honolulu) is remarkable. Those who consider Hawaii a remote part of the country are startled to find an orchestra of first-class caliber. I note a remarkable improvement in just two years since my first visit here in 1951 during which time I played solo concerts and chamber music but had the opportunity to hear the orchestra. I congratulate Mr. Barati and his orchestra on a magnificent achievement."

Leona Gordon is the youngest of five children of Dr. Andres Fjeldsted Oddstad and his wife Stefania Ingibjörg (Emma Stoneson) Oddstad, of San Francisco. Mrs. Oddstad is a sister of the well-known Stoneson brothers and of Mrs. Christopherson, the mother of Eileen Christie (see *Icel. Can. Spring 1952*, p. 36).

Like her cousin, Eileen, Leona started her public career in singing with the San Francisco Bank Christmas Chorus (1947-1950). Since then she has taken part in operas, made appearances on radio and TV, has sung many solo recitals in the Bay area, and made concert tours with her husband. She has been a member of the San Francisco Opera Ass'n, and did the role of Nanetta in Verdi's "Falstaff" produced by Stamford University.

Leona was born in San Francisco, July 7, 1928. She studied for three years at San Francisco State College, majoring in music, and then registered as a senior at U. of Cal. but did not stay to graduate, her music activities by then making great demands of her time. She has participated in other artistic enterprises, such as dancing and acting, at the San Francisco Muni-

cial Theatre. During 1945 at the United Nations conference, Leona was among the very few high school students under 20 who were picked as guides and ushers for the conference. Leona was a Spanish speaking guide, and she found it most impressive to be "in on" the beginnings of the United Nations.

Leona Gordon has been described by the press as a "distinctive Nordic beauty, of Icelandic heritage, with golden hair, blue eyes and fair complexion. Her charm and the natural beauty of her voice captivates and delights laymen and connoisseurs alike. As a member of the San Francisco Opera Association she has sung under most of the world's greatest conductors. . . . Fine musicianship and artistic integrity have made her radio and television appearances outstanding successes . . . . Recent appearances in the important role of "Nanetta" in Verdi's "Falstaff" given at Stamford University, brought a tremendous tribute from leading critics, famous musicians and audiences of thousands. . . . The impression is growing that Leona Oddstad Gordon is a singer of unlimited potentialities, a bright star in the musical galaxy".

Leona's husband, Marcus Gordon was a child prodigy, giving his first concert in S. F. when nine years old. At the age of fifteen he auditioned for Josef Llehvine in S. F., who was so impressed that he took Marcus back with him to New York, where he studied on a Fellowship at the Julliard School, graduating at nineteen. Mr. Gordon has concertized throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Alaska and the Hawaii Islands. His three solo recitals in New York's Town Hall immediately projected him into the front rank of American pianists. A recent appearance as guest artist with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra before a record-breaking, standing-room-only audience earned Marcus Gordon one of the warmest and most spontaneous ovations ever accorded an artist in the Bay area.

Leona and Marcus Gordon have a little daughter called Marcia Lee, which is a contraction of both their names.

During their November visit to the Hawaii Islands they performed also on the Island of Kauai, and they expect to make other visits to the Islands.

H. D.

Miss Shirley Eloise Kjernested, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Karl Kjernested of Oakview, Manitoba, was awarded the Red River Chapter's Scholarship, Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire by the Educational Secretary, Mrs. Kristbjorn Freeman, at the annual meeting. This award was given for high scholastic standing and good citizenship. Shirley is a pupil at the Manitoba Normal School.

#### ICELAND'S THOUSAND YEARS

This popular book is still available. There is a steady demand for it at the Keflavik Airport in Iceland as international travellers wish to know something about Iceland, its history and literature. Special price of the unbound copy is \$1.00 and neatly bound with title in gold leaf \$2.00, post paid. Order from: Mrs. H. F. Danielson, 869 Garfield St. Winnipeg, Canada

# ICELANDIC ANNIVERSARY IN NORTH DAKOTA

By RICHARD BECK

The 75th anniversary of the founding of the Icelandic settlement in Pembina County in North Dakota was commemorated with special services in the various Icelandic churches of the district on Sunday, June 14, and with elaborate festivities at Mountain, North Dakota, the following day, Monday, June 16, with an estimated attendance of 3,000 people from far and near.

Highlighting the historic program was the presence of a special representative of the Icelandic government, the Honorable Petur Eggerz, Counselor of the Icelandic Legation in Washington, D. C., who brought warm and enthusiastically received greetings from the old homeland of the settlers. Governor Norman Brundsdale of North Dakota was represented by Mr. F. M. Einarson of Mountain, a member of the North Dakota State Legislature and son of one of the Icelandic pioneers. Other featured speakers were Mr. Snorri Thorfinnson of Lisbon, North Dakota, who is a native son of the settlement and a noted agriculturalist, and the writer.

Not only were the history of the pioneers and the later development of the settlement traced in the addresses of the day, but also memorably portrayed in an impressive parade and an equally striking historical pageant.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century several Icelandic settlements were founded in various parts of the United States, in Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, and elsewhere. Of these the colony in Pembina

County is the most important, the largest as well as one of the oldest.

Led by the late Reverend Pall Thorlaksson, who has justly been called "the father" of the settlement, the first Icelandic settlers came from a newly established colony on the west shore of Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba to North Dakota in the spring and early summer of 1878.

Shortly after other settlers arrived, especially from the Winnipeg Lake colony, but also from the Icelandic settlements in Wisconsin and Minnesota, and even directly from Iceland. The main stream of the settlers from these various directions came during the years 1879-1882. So rapid was the growth of the settlement that before the end of the year 1879 four Icelandic communities were in the process of formation.

Home-founding in a new land has ever been a strenuous undertaking. The first years of the Icelandic settlement in North Dakota were no exception; they were a period of hardships and back-breaking toil. Thanks to their energy and economy, and not least to the untiring efforts of Reverend Thorlaksson, the settlers, many of whom had little or no means, soon succeeded in bettering their conditions. Their idealism and willingness to sacrifice carried them forward.

These qualities are well illustrated in the way which the pioneers financed the building of the church at Mountain. Money had, of course, to be borrowed for that purpose, and to make that possible twelve of the farm-



ers mortgaged their lands. Let it be added that the congregation later paid them back.

The erection of the Mountain Church, the oldest Icelandic church on the American continent, is associated with the name and forward-looking activities of Reverend Thorlaksson, founder and first pastor of the Mountain congregation (1880-1882) he donated a plot of his land for a church site and cemetery, and laid the groundwork for the erection of a church building. When his untimely death in March 1882 cut short his career, he had, however, only succeeded in having had some trees felled and brought together as building material for the future church.

Hence, it remained for his successor, the late Reverend H. B. Thorgrimsen, who was pastor of the Mountain congregation 1883-1886 and 1901-1912, to carry on the building of the church to its completion. It was built during the spring and summer months of 1884, and meetings were held in it that fall, although it was not formally dedicated until June 1887.

Originally a simple structure, it has naturally undergone some changes in the course of the years, and recently was moved a short distance from its old site. However, it is still in use, a dignified and historic landmark, and a worthy monument to the vision and labor of the pioneers who built it at a great sacrifice.

This historic Icelandic church has, of course, been a center of the religious and other cultural activities within the community. What is still more interesting and significant, it has a place of unusual importance in the annals of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod of America, for that organization was cradled within its walls.

There it was, at the call of Reverend Thorgrimsen, the local pastor of the day, that representatives of the then existing Icelandic congregations in Manitoba and North Dakota gathered to form a synod of their own, on January 23-25, 1885. And on the golden anniversary of the Icelandic Synod, the Mountain church was, as it should be, the centre of the memorable celebration held in Pembina County. The seventieth anniversary of that historic church, the oldest Icelandic house of worship on American soil, will no doubt be duly observed next year.

Besides Reverend Thorlaksson and Reverend Thorgrimsen, the following pastors, all of whom have played an important part in the work of the Icelandic Synod, have served the Mountain congregation: Reverend F. J. Bergman (1886-1901), Reverend K. K. Olafson (1812-1925), Dr. H. Sigmar (1926-1945), and Reverend E. H. Fafnis, from 1945 until his recent death.

Not only did the Icelandic pioneers in Pembina County very early give their attention to the religious life of the community by building a house of worship; with characteristic Nordic love of law and order, as well as with deep-rooted interest in education, they equally early began township organization and forming school districts, the first one being organized in February in 1881, only three years after the arrival of the first settlers.

And down through the years, through good seasons and lean, the settlement has advanced, or at least held its own, materially, and generally maintained a high level of intellectual life.

It is now a prosperous community which has made a significant contribution to the cultural and material de-



velopment of the state. Its sons and daughters have filled and are found in positions of prominence within the state and outside its borders.

Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the internationally famous explorer and author, while born in Manitoba, came to the Mountain district with his parents at the age of two and grew up there. Emile Walters, who has won wide fame as a painter, grew up in the Gardar community of the Icelandic settlement, and the late Dr. C. H. Thordarson of Chicago, a noted inventor, manufacturer, and bibliophile, also spent a part of his youth in the Gardar district.

Stephan G. Stephansson, considered one of the greatest of Icelandic poets of all time, whose centenary occurs this year, was a pioneer and for nearly a decade a resident of the Gardar community, and has paid tribute to the settlement in some notable poems. K. N. Julius, leading Icelandic humorous poet, made his home for half a century in the Eyford community near Mountain.

Mrs. Thorstina Jackson Walters, the wife of the painter and a daughter of one of the pioneers of the district, has written in Icelandic a history of the Icelandic settlement in North Dakota, and now has in press a book in English on the same subject; she is also the author of many newspaper and magazine articles.

Among prominent lawyers from the settlement are the late Professor Sveinbjorn Johnson of the University of Illinois, previously Attorney General and Justice of the Supreme Court of North Dakota, author of the book **Pioneers of Freedom** and translator of the famed Icelandic lawbook **Grágás**; the late Hjalmar A. Bergman, Chairman of the Board of Regents of the

University of Manitoba and Justice of the Court of Appeal of the Province of Manitoba; Judge Gudmundur Grimson, Justice of the Supreme Court of North Dakota since 1950; and Bardi G. Skulason, attorney and Icelandic Consul at Portland, Oregon. The present Attorney General of North Dakota, Elmo T. Christianson, also comes from the Icelandic settlement.

Well-known medical men from the district include: Dr. B. J. Brandson, Dr. O. Bjornson, and Dr. M. B. Hall-dorsson, all of Winnipeg, and all now deceased, as well as the late Dr. G. J. Gislason of Grand Forks, North Dakota. The settlement also can claim the late Dr. Harriet G. McGraw, for years a widely known practitioner at Tyron, Nebraska. Dr. Gudmundur G. Thorgrimsen, son of Rev. Thorgrimsen, the pioneer pastor, has for years been a practising physician in Grand Forks.

Noted clergymen who are the product of the district include the late Dr. Rognvaldur Petursson of Winnipeg, for years president of the Icelandic Federated Churches of America and of the Icelandic National League; and Reverend K. K. Olafson, for twenty years president of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod of America, now of Sharon, Wisconsin. He preached at services in two of the leading churches of his old home district in connection with the 75th anniversary commemoration of the settlement.

Professor S. K. Hall, a pioneer son of the Gardar community, formerly of Winnipeg, but now of Wynyard, Saskatchewan, is a noted musician and composer.

Among well-known educators from the settlement are: Dr. Albert F. Arnason, State Commissioner for Higher

Education in North Dakota; Professor T. W. Thordarson of the North Dakota Agricultural College at Fargo; Professor Peter Olafson of the New York State Veterinary College, Ithaca, New York; and Professor Dora S. Lewis of Hunter College in New York City.

The North Dakota Icelandic settlement has produced a number of other able professional men and women, too numerous to list in a brief historical survey. Others have won a name for themselves in business and other related fields.

In the field of agriculture and conservation, besides Thorfinnson, mentioned above, there are such men as G. B. Gunlogson of Racine, Wisconsin, and Victor Sturlaugson of Langdon, North Dakota, to name but a few in that field.

Many Icelanders from the settlement have been members of the State Legislature and held other public offices. Thus J. K. Olafson of Gardar was for twelve years a member of the Legislature, and F. M. Einarson, previously referred to, was last fall elected to his fourth term.

Assuredly, the Icelandic settlement

in Pembina County has both made a notable contribution and been a credit to the old homeland of the settlers. Its past record is a challenge to the present day generation of their descendants.

The following evaluation by Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, contained in a message to the 50th anniversary celebration of the settlement, applies no less forcefully to its history and contribution on its 75th anniversary.

"You are celebrating a colonization that has been powerful in its results upon the lives of all of us. Those results have been to our advantage, in most cases. I for one am grateful that my most formative years were spent near Mountain, under just those pioneer conditions".

Other sons and daughters of the Icelandic settlement no doubt share those sentiments, and the fruitful impact and contribution of the colony are, of course, far from limited to the large group of men and women who have their roots there, and now have spread all over the American continent and beyond its boundaries.

—Reprinted from *The American-Scandinavian Review*

### CREAMERY BUTTERMAKER'S COMPETITION — MANITOBA DAIRY CONVENTION

Mr. Larus Bjornson, who for many years has been a member of the staff of the North Star Creamery at Arborg as buttermaker, won the following prizes at this convention: Canadian Bank of Commerce special, a gold watch, first prize. Appleford paper product special, a silver tray, first prize. Also three cash prizes of \$22.00 and \$13.00 all first prizes in three different classes.

Mr. Bjornson is now operating his

own creamery which he purchased last fall at Fraserwood, Man.

★

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# FIRST IMPRESSION OF CANADA

by Rev. ROBERT JACK

I had been introduced to this great Dominion partly through books and partly through people who had at one time lived here. From both these sources I had gained, I must admit, a somewhat meagre knowledge of the country.

One must live in a country for some time to acquaint oneself with its various aspects. It is, therefore, utterly impossible for me to give a fair impression of Canada after two month's residence here, but with the knowledge I had gained before my arrival, and what I have seen and heard in this vast land, I will without prejudice give you some impressions I have formed.

I miss the mountains, the rushing rivers, and the open sea. From my youth I have been face to face with heather-covered hills or grim, snow-clad mountains. From my youth I have spent endless days of sheer delight wading in deep rivers or burns, catching trout by the score. I have always loved the sea, an open boat, and a sail. To an islander it is a strange feeling to find himself in the middle of a vast continent, on a prairie land as flat as a billiard table. The sky alone seems the same. Even that seems to have been bluer in Scotland, the land of my birth, and in Iceland, the land of my adoption.

Compared to all the European cities I have visited, Winnipeg is so completely different, and so utterly strange. Here no little hills provide the pleasure of changing gears; here no double-decked trams afford the exquisite joy of a carefree ride; here no parking space seems available. Winnipeg seems to me to have been built

in a week, a rush-job, like a Klondike town sans the picturesque miners in steel helmets with their little axes. It is hard to realize that people of my kith and kin and other Europeans have built Winnipeg.

You have every reason, however, to be proud of your Legislative Building, a house obviously built for noble speeches and great deeds. It is a work of art, and from it, no doubt, radiate the influences that are making Manitoba such a progressive province. I like, too, the University, a noble seat of learning, an Alma Mater free for all with the thirst for learning. A university within a Democracy will become an Aristocracy, in the classical sense of the word, where the rule of the many who learn is also the rule of the best.

Being a Scot, I look at the prices of goods wherever I go. In Canada they seem to be higher than in all other countries in which I have spent some time. If the wages were in proportion to the high cost of living, it would be a different story. On the contrary, the wage standards are lower than in Iceland or Scotland, and goods, on the whole, more expensive.

Canada like other countries of the world has her problems, and I do not think that her potential greatness will be realized until she has a population at least as great as that of the British Isles.

I am glad to note that Canada is a country of sport. I saw my first game of ice hockey the other night. It was a junior game and it impressed me, particularly because of its overwhelming speed. It occurred to me that if

this national sport were slower it would be more interesting to watch. I thought that the players often overran the puck, and as a result a finer degree of passing was lost. I had to wait until I arrived in Canada to participate in the game of curling. I enjoy it if the ice is smooth and good. But of all sports I enjoy association football or soccer, as it is called here, the most. In my opinion there is no other game which demands such accurate passing and concentrated thought as does this outdoor sport. I am glad to hear that the Scots and others in Winnipeg are making good progress with the building of Alexander Park. Britain's national game may in time gain a respected place in the hearts of all Canadians. Here at Arborg we hope to build a team, and also at Riverton. The material is here; only the coaching and interest are lacking.

I have every reason to believe that the people of this great Dominion are healthy, but I have seldom seen so many people with false teeth. Too

much candy and pop may be the reason.

It is the people, however, who have caught my imagination and my heart. I speak mainly of my parishioners and the few others I have met around the Arborg-Riverton Parish and in Winnipeg. They are a few Scots, but for the most part Icelandic Canadians who are now a part of this great country. Of the Icelandic Canadian I can already say this much. He is in the classical sense of the word an Aristocrat, that is, a man who tries to give more to life than he expects to take out of it. Canada and Manitoba are richer because of him. Many of us agree with Lord Dufferin and Lord Tweedsmuir that the Icelanders have played a distinctive part in the settlement of the country and that their worth has been shown in almost every sphere of Canadian life. Here in northern New Iceland the fortitude and physical courage of the pioneers and their descendants are forever recorded in the annals of the Canadian nation. In the hurly-burly of a rapidly expanding nation

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## SHARES IN DEVELOPING PLANE CONTROL DEVICE

Jonas Hallgrimson, Saxonville, Mass. a son of Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Hallgrimson, formerly of Mountain, N. D. was one of the air force scientists, associated with a revolutionary electronic control device, according to a story in a Boston daily newspaper.

The Massachusetts scientist was among the group at Air Force Cambridge Research Center that revealed to the public recently the details of a device, which controls incoming planes at busy air bases. The scientist's mother now resides at San Jose, Calif.

In a well-guarded underground

bunker at Fort Dawes, at the entrance of Boston Harbor, according to the newspaper account, more than 30 newsmen watched Volscan, the popular name for the new air traffic system, as it contacted air force planes and guided them safely, time after time, to four separate airports in the Greater Boston area.

Mr. Hallgrimson, who is 30 joined Air Force Cambridge Research centre in 1946, following service in the Signal Corps. He has been engaged in the design and construction of the equipment used in the radar portion of Volscan. He has been active in radar work since 1940.



they have preserved their individualism—indeed the only true basis of civilization.

And now a word on the weather. In November, when I arrived from Iceland, it was good. Of late, according to reports, it has become a typical Manitoba winter. The weatherman has reported on several occasions that the frost reached 25-30 degrees below zero. So far I have not found it nearly as cold as in Iceland, where ten below with a hurricane of wet salt-filled air really gets into the marrow of your bones. Perhaps my blood will thin in time, but I shall try to keep the temperature of my house at least ten degrees colder than that of most houses here. As in Reykjavik, the houses here are far too warm, a bad thing for the health. To my mind the hot-water heating systems of Iceland are superior to those extant. Even in the far-off Arctic Parish of Grímsey I had modern heat-

ing from crude oil, no coal, no dust and no ashes.

Obviously my first impressions are varied. After a year, when they have crystallized, my story will certainly be a different one.

REV. ROBERT JACK, born August 5, 1913 in Glasgow, Scotland. Son of John Jack, building contractor. Mother, Mary, and M.D.B.A. degree at the University of Glasgow, 1936. Engaged by Icelandic Athletic Association as football coach to travel around Iceland. Enrolled in the Department of Theology, University of Iceland, 1937. Graduated in 1944. Ordained June 18th, 1944. First parish at Eydalir in eastern Iceland. Appointed minister at Grímsey where he remained until departure for Canada, 1953. Arrived in November, 1953 to become Lutheran minister at Arborg, Manitoba. Married. Three sons.

—Editor's Note: The Icelandic Canadian welcomes Rev. Robert Jack and his family to Canada. We trust that this country will treat them well, and that they will be happy amongst us. We appreciate his honest appraisal of this part of Canada as contrasted with Iceland and Scotland. In the words of the immortal Robbie, his countryman: "Oh, would some power the giftie gie us to see oursel's as ithers see us".

## Awarded Scholarship



Victor J. MacCoshman

Victor J. MacCoshman, 25, was recently awarded the Shell Oil Fellowship

of \$900.00 and tuition at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Already a Bachelor and Master of Science, Mr. MacCoshman graduated with honors in chemistry at the University of Manitoba. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. MacCoshman, Edmonton, Alta. His mother is the former Anna Hannesson, daughter of Hannes and Gudrun Hannesson, formerly of Gimli.



Carleton College, Ottawa, conferred an honorary degree of Doctor of Law (LL.D.) upon Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General of the U. N., at a special convocation held in St. James United Church, Ottawa, February 26. This will be the first honorary degree awarded by Carleton College.

## WHAT MAKES TORONTO TICK ?

by J. RAGNAR JOHNSON, Q.C.



J. Ragnar Johnson, Q.C.

Toronto is probably the most maligned community in North America. Known to its critics alternately as Toronto the Good or Hog Town, it is the butt of more cartoon, gibes and calumny than any city of its size. The feeling has apparently existed for a long time, for in the days of the Family Compact, John Galt, the Scottish immigrant poet, called it "one of the worst blue-devil haunts on the face of the earth." More recently, the Honourable Mr. Justice Maybank of the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench, when he represented South Centre Winnipeg in the House of Commons, vehemently shouted: "The City of Toronto has more grasping, greedy, unctuous people in it than any other city in the world." One would scarcely quarrel with the sagacious verdict of a man who has become a high court

justice, but one might reasonably wonder what would impel a man in public life to utter such fearful words.

Even a casual observer does not have to be in Toronto long to come to a realization that here is a busy, energetic and bustling metropolis, the commercial and industrial heart of Canada—quickly supplanting Montreal as its financial headquarters; an important seat of learning and culture; and the nerve centre of the artistic, literary and theatrical life of our great country. Here scientific and medical contributions to the world have been made, great business enterprises directed, books written, national magazines published, and television and radio programmes arranged and produced. Toronto is the headquarters of the Meteorological Service, the mailing centre of Canada, the home of the greatest mining Stock Exchange in the world, the air-hub of Eastern Canada with ultra modern airport facilities; and its citizens use nearly half a million telephones. It is the national headquarters of several churches and service clubs and such institutions as the Canadian Red Cross, the Health League of Canada, the Canadian National Institute of the Blind, the Institute of International Affairs and many others.

Located on the north shore of Lake Ontario, almost opposite the mouth of the Niagara River, Toronto was in the 15th and 16th centuries the southern end of the most important of the Indian trails connecting Lake Huron and Lake Ontario and the site was called "The Toronto Carrying Place".

The name "Toronto" is of Huron Indian origin, meaning "a place of meeting". It appeared officially on Galinée's map of the lake region prepared in 1670 for Louis XIV of France and was well known to that intrepid explorer La Salle. In 1750 the French established a fortified trading post at the foot of Dufferin Street, naming it Fort Rouillé, after the Colonial Minister at that time. The Treaty of Paris in 1763 brought an end to the French regime, and in 1791 the Constitutional Act divided Canada into the provinces of Lower Canada and Upper Canada. Upon the direction of the Governor of Canada, Lord Dorchester, the former Guy Carleton, Toronto, because of its strategic geographic location and its excellent harbour, was selected as the capital of Upper Canada. In 1793 the name was changed to York, in honour of the Duke of York, son of George III and in the following year building commenced. Building continues, for a lady who recently visited Toronto was asked, upon her return, what she thought of the place. She replied, "It will be fine when they get it finished." A trucking contractor whose vehicles are often seen on Yonge Street and elsewhere was asked when one might be able to travel unobstructed on Toronto streets. His reply was brief but decisive: "Never, I hope."

In 1834 the population having increased to 9,000, the thriving town of York was incorporated into the City of Toronto, with the volatile reformer and later rebel, William Lyon Mackenzie as its first mayor. The population is now about 700,000 while twelve adjacent municipalities add a further half million. Various annexations of nearby towns were made but the twelve neighbours referred to,

preferred to maintain their respective autonomous positions and the result was the creation on January 1st, 1953 of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, a bold experiment in municipal government. It has a Chairman appointed by the provincial government for the years 1953 and 1954 (then elected), and a council consisting of the mayor, two of four controllers and nine of eighteen aldermen of Toronto, and the twelve reeves of the various municipalities involved. The metropolitan area is 216 square miles.

So in about a century and a half, we witness a transformation from wigwam to modern homes, long houses to towering skyscrapers, rude huts to luxurious hotels and apartments, frontier trails to superhighways, travel by pony, canoe and batteau to Cadillacs, streamlined street cars and a sixty million dollar subway, an Indian meeting place to an ultra modern and beautiful metropolis upon which are fixed the eyes of an admiring and sometimes, sad to relate, an envious world.

What makes Toronto tick? The Civic motto is "Industry-Intelligence-Integrity". Laudable words to be sure, but to them could be added several others, such as Ingenuity, Initiative, Independence of thought and action. The late Dr. John W. Dafoe, editor of the Winnipeg Free Press, frequently drew attention to the Colonial Mind, which he claimed, was fostered in Toronto. One will also find champions of Imperialism who are ever ready to fight the war of 1812. The fanaticism displayed in the parade of Orangemen on July 12th is a sight to contemplate. These facts of insularity are strangely offset by a degree of urbanity seldom witnessed elsewhere and an energy that causes almost every one to appear that he is in a constant hurry. Some

critics are unkind enough to suggest that Toronto people are everlastingly running to make a fast dollar. Be this as it may, the monuments of brains and energy are to be found in invaluable medical and scientific research, business enterprises extending throughout the world, congested motor traffic, TV antennas in abundance and all the comforts of modern and gracious living.

The opportunities for acquiring knowledge are perhaps unequalled in any comparable centre, except perhaps Boston. The University of Toronto, under the presidency of Sidney E. Smith—well-known in Western Canada—is a notable seat of learning. Here insulin was discovered in 1921 by the late Sir Frederick Banting and Dr. Charles H. Best, the only Canadians to win the coveted Nobel Prize. In 1879 Sir Sanford Fleming devised standard time, which is in universal operation. The Conservatory of Music, for many years directed by Sir Ernest McMillan, enjoys an international reputation. The Art Gallery is built around "the Grange" the former home of an historian and writer, Goldwyn Smith. It houses works of art and here in 1951 the priceless treasures of the Vienna collections were displayed. In the Royal Ontario Museum is gathered a tremendous general collection, one of the most popular being the Chinese objects of the Ming Dynasty. The learning of the medical profession combined with the generosity of the citizens has produced famous institutions for the betterment of the health of mankind, including several large hospitals such as the Hospital for Sick Children. There are also the Banting Institute, the Best Research Institute, and presently will be constructed a new Cancer Research Insti-

tute to cost nearly ten million dollars.

The first extensive business enterprise was established in 1812 by Jesse Ketchum when he commenced a tannery. The word "integrity" in the city's slogan may be invoked here, for Ketchum was an ardent prohibitionist and at one time offered to give the young town a valuable stretch of land for the purpose of opening up a street upon the condition that no house be permitted to be erected on it that dealt in any manner with alcoholic beverages. The bargain has been maintained to this day, and the thoroughfare is appropriately called Temperance Street. Commercial enterprises directed from Toronto are now often world-wide. A Toronto lawyer, Miller Lash, Q.C., organized Brazilian Light, Heat and Power Corporation, a utility doing business throughout Brazil. A Toronto firm recently made a complete aerial survey of Pakistan. Business transacted by Toronto banks, insurance companies, oil, mining and manufacturing concerns have international ramifications.

Toronto is not without its interesting characters, some of them bold and independent in their thinking, as one may determine by reading books and magazines, watching television or listening to the radio. A current radio commentator is Gordon Sinclair, a globe-trotter who has written several books and innumerable articles about his travels to strange and far away lands. A successful but eccentric lawyer died a few years ago leaving an unusual will providing a valuable bequest to the mother who gave birth to the largest number of children in 10 years, thus precipitating the "Miller stork derby". A former mayor, Thomas Foster, bequeathed large sums to charwomen, caretakers and news boys, and



provided for annual picnics for under-privileged children.

Toronto is still a meeting place, a natural result of its location, and facilities. It has become such a popular convention city that arrangements for the holding of a sizeable gathering must be made years in advance. The Canadian National Exhibition is by far the largest annual exhibition in the world. Commenced in 1879 it now attracts annually upwards of 3,000,000 people during its fourteen days. Visitors, exhibitors and competitors come from afar and it is not surprising therefore that the land and buildings of the CNE comprising 350 acres with a frontage of a mile and a half on Lake Ontario, are valued over fifty million dollars. The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair held each November fosters the exhibition of livestock, agricultural and horticultural products, and features an international riding and jumping competition. For the past six years in each June, Toronto has been the gathering place of thousands of international merchants, symbolizing the ideal of unrestricted multi-lateral trade amid growing understanding between nations. Just as to the Indians of yesterday, "Toronto" meant a place of meeting, or a market place, to international traders representing 60 countries, Toronto is still the place of meeting, the market place of the world. At the Canadian International Trade Fair about 40 or more countries participated amid a framework of the merchandise of the world, and its representatives trade goods and ideas, discuss products and prices and in a gigantic show window transact business totalling untold millions of dollars. The Trade Fair was Canada's answer to a trade problem confronting the world after World War II. Most of

this country's overseas customers, upon whom she relied to a large extent to maintain a balanced economy, were seriously short of dollars because of the disastrous impact of the war on world trade. Canadian economic experts decided to help overseas customers earn more dollars by giving them assistance in selling their goods in Canada. An interesting result of the Trade Fair is that many exhibitors from abroad have built manufacturing plants in Canada.

Toronto has over 500 conventions of one kind or other each year, drawing to the city over four million visitors annually. It is little wonder that a casual tourist finds difficulty in securing hotel accommodation, a taxi or a seat on a street car. The conventions may consist of breeders of horses or dogs, of psychiatrists or morticians, of war veterans or educationalists. Occasionally, the meetings have a historic significance. In 1951 the 100th Anniversary of the issue of Canada's first postage stamp was fittingly observed by a gathering of philatelists and an exhibition of stamp collectors from the world. The displays included those of the late King George VI and of the late President Roosevelt. In 1952 the International Red Cross convened and the nations of the world sent its delegates. On this occasion the writer was privileged to represent Iceland, and in turn to make the personal acquaintance of men and women of every colour and creed, from all parts of the globe, assembled together in one of the greatest humanitarian organizations known to mankind.

Toronto is a sports centre and its citizens become very enthusiastic over baseball in summer, football in the autumn and Canada's national sport, hockey, in winter. On the Varsity

Stadium gridiron is witnessed the annual Grey Cup classic which the East seems for the most part to win. At the Maple Leaf Gardens originates the radio and television voice and picture of Foster Hewitt, known to listeners and viewers across the country. There are dozens of other sports—golf, tennis, squash racquets, soccer and practically everything else from table tennis to polo.

In assessing what makes Toronto tick, it may not be altogether correct to enumerate its many physical assets and attractions, its wealth, size or commercial success. The real answer lies in the character of its citizens. While there is a fair share of wrongdoers, the average Torontonians is a conscientious, law-abiding person who enjoys nothing more than minding his own business, working at his own trade and making a reasonable contribution to improving the lot of those less fortunate than himself. Often accused of a haughty bearing and a cool manner, a Torontonian is as friendly and as hospitable a person as will be found

anywhere. If he has prospered better than others the answer is probably that he has worked more diligently and has planned somewhat better.

Does the writer like Toronto? He does not think much about the subject as he resides in the neighboring Village of Forest Hill.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

##### Jon Ragnar Johnson, Q.C.

Born in Winnipeg, May 7th, 1902. Son of Mr. Finnur Johnson and the late Mrs. Johnson. Graduated from University of Manitoba in Arts, 1923, in Law, 1926.

Following award of Pugsley Scholarship in International Law by Harvard University, took post graduate course at Harvard Law School, graduating in 1927 with degree of LL.M.

Practised in Winnipeg until 1935, four years of which was as Crown Counsel in Department of Attorney General.

Has resided in Toronto since May, 1935, where he practices on own account.

Named King's Counsel in December, 1950.

Consul for Iceland since 1947, and in 1952 awarded Order of the Falcon.

Lives in Village of Forest Hill where he has been on the municipal council since January, 1952.

Married Marion Sellers of Winnipeg in 1933.

Has one son, Jon Ragnar Jr. age 11.

## Honored by Netherlands Queen

In a ceremonial meeting of the Foreign Trade Association of Southern California, **Stanley T. Olafson**, manager of the world trade department of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, was decorated with the Knight's Cross of Orange-Nassau of the Netherlands.

The decoration was presented by Dr. Adrian Hartog, Consul of the Netherlands at Los Angeles, on behalf of Queen Juliana in appreciation of Mr. Olafson's services in handling arrangements for her entertainment during her visit here last year.

Mr. Olafson, a former president of the Foreign Trade Association, originated the idea of staging an annual Foreign Trade Week, an event which has expanded, since its inception in 1927, to an observance which has national sponsorship each year throughout every part of the United States and, later, in other parts of the world.

The average purchase price of a new car was \$2,505 last year, \$22 more than in 1952, \$957 more than in 1946, and \$1,426 more than in 1939.

## *Iceland's Thousand Years*

by MARY-LYNNE RYCKMAN

*Iceland's Thousand Years*, a series of lectures on the history and literature of Iceland, was edited by Professor Skuli Johnson, head of the Classics department at the University of Manitoba, and published in Winnipeg in 1945, with a second edition in 1946.

"Iceland's Thousand Years" contains many interesting lectures. The one which I found most outstanding is "The Dark Ages in Iceland", by Holmfridur Danielson. This lecture deals with the period of time between 1262 and 1800—a period of natural catastrophes. Famines, the Black Death, the small pox plague, and volcanic eruptions killed great masses of cattle and people. During this time, Iceland was under the rule of Norway, and later Denmark ruled. The Icelanders had to endure harsh, unjust laws, as well as natural disasters. The oppression of some of the Catholic clergy was another adversity they had to overcome. Despite all this, Icelandic culture has been preserved. Although many schools were closed the thirst for knowledge was great. Sagas were read and re-read; the Edda poems were memorized; everything that was available in writing was greedily absorbed by the Icelanders. Mental and spiritual elements were the dominant influence in their existence and only through these, did they survive.

The style of "Iceland's Thousand Years" is conversational, detailed, didactic, factual, and highly organized. Its conversational characteristic comes from the fact that it is a series of lectures, originally given at The Icelandic Canadian Evening School in Win-

nipeg. Detail and fact are contained in these lectures. The "fact" is connected largely with the history, and the "detail" is found in the sections dealing with the literature of Iceland. Both these sections do, however, contain both detail and fact. This book is didactic because it uses comparisons and examples to make clearer the points it is trying to put forth. "Iceland's Thousand Years" is very highly organized. The lecturers are placed in a chronological sequence, starting first with a sketch of the geography of Iceland, then, the colonization of Iceland, continuing with history, up to 1944. Therefore, to sum up the strong points, "Iceland's Thousand Years" is a detailed, didactic, factual, highly organized, and very conversational book.

"Iceland's Thousand Years" is a very outstanding historical book on Iceland, its people and its culture. It contains a fund of knowledge about Icelandic history from the colonization up to the twentieth century. The colonization of Greenland and the discovery of America are also dealt with. The lectures are very well written, in a vivid manner. This book has, however, some weaknesses. One of them is the fact that too many names are mentioned and it is impossible to remember all the connections. Accompanying every name is a reference to some one else, (either a niece, a son-in-law, a stepfather, or a brother.) Another weakness is the fact that Icelandic terms are used. Although these terms are explained when they are first introduced, there are too many to remember. To a person who has a knowledge of the

Icelandic language, this would not be an obstacle, but to one who does not know the language, these terms are a trifle confusing. These are the major weakness in 'Iceland's Thousand Years'.

This book contains a great deal of value for me. My mother is an Icelandic of direct descent and that is why I am interested in Iceland, particularly since my Grandparents have just come back from a visit to Iceland, (their native land). I have heard many stories about the country and I have many relatives living there. As you probably know, Icelanders are very proud of their heritage and even though I am not a full-blooded Icelandic, I am still proud of my Icelandic heritage. "Iceland's Thousand Years" has made me prouder of this because I have learned more about the culture of these people. It is quite pleasing to

know that I have descended from such a distinguished race.

On the whole, I believe that "Iceland's Thousand Years" is a very fine piece of literature. I thoroughly enjoyed it and I am certainly going to search for more information on Iceland.

(It might perhaps be stimulating for young people of Icelandic descent to hear what a sixteen-year old girl has to say about **Iceland's Thousand Years**, which she has read many times. When asked to write a critical book-review as an exercise in composition at her school. Mary-Lynne Ryckman chose to review this book. She is an outstanding student in grade XI, at Lord Selkirk school, and this winter took a leading part in the school's play "Let's Make An Opera", by Benjamin Britten. In reviewing the performance, The Winnipeg Tribune said in part "Outstanding were the lead roles, played by Mary-Lynne Ryckman, whose acting and gestures in the part of Mrs. Parworthy were of top quality . . ." Mary-Lynne is the daughter of George Ryckman and his wife Gyða Hallson Ryckman, and is a granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Óli Hallson of Eriksdale, Man.)  
A.V.

## The Annual Dinner and Dance

On January 29th last, the Blue Room of the Marlborough Hotel resounded once more to the merrymaking of Winnipeg Icelanders and their friends. The occasion was the annual Dinner-Dance of the Icelandic Canadian Club, which year by year seems to be growing in attendance and public favor.

This time the committee in charge was fortunate to get as main speaker the Rev. Robert Jack, recently installed as Icelandic minister at Arborg. This "Phenomenon", as he has been called, is something unique among our men of the cloth, having as a young man left his native Scotland to become football coach for the youth of Iceland and later a minister in their national church. At the end of an able address, partly humorous, partly reminiscent, Rev. Jack briefly delighted the dinner guests with a sample of his flawless

Icelandic.

Other items on the program that night included a piano solo by Miss Helga Baldwinson, and a vocal solo by Miss Ingibjörg Bjarnason accompanied by Miss Sigrid Bardal. Felicitations were brought from the Manitoba Government by the Hon. Ivan Schultz; from the Icelandic National League by Rev. V. J. Eylands; and from the Leif Eirikson Club by Erlingur Eggertson. At about 9 o'clock the Jimmy Gowler dance band took over.

Every year a few points outside of Winnipeg are represented on this festive occasion, but more would be in order. We would urge the near-lying Icelandic communities to plan now to organize a party of one or more carloads to come and join their Winnipeg brethren at their annual fun and frolic next January.  
H.J.S.



## PERSONALITIES IN THE NEWS

### NELS JOHNSON APPOINTED TO N. DAK. SUPREME COURT



Nels Johnson

Nels A. Johnson, a lawyer practising in Bismarck, N. Dak. and former Attorney General of the State of N. Dak., has been appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of North Dakota, effective April 5, 1954. He was appointed by Governor Norman Brunsdale to succeed Judge A. M. Christianson who died in February last. In a poll of members of the North Dakota Bar Association three nominees were given a preference and the Governor selected Mr. Johnson, one of the three.

Upon acceptance Nels Johnson stated that he would be a candidate for the Supreme Court on the no-party ballot in the June primary election. If nominated in the primary and successful in the November general election he will complete Judge Christian-

son's term, which expires at the end of 1958.

This new judge is a brother of Mrs. V. J. Eylands of Winnipeg. He is no stranger to the Icelandic community in Winnipeg. In 1946, when he was Attorney General in North Dakota, he was the speaker at the annual concert held under the auspices of the Icelandic Canadian Club. The title of his address was "Small Nations in Our Modern World", a timely subject and well thought out by the former Attorney General.

Nels Johnson was born in Akranes, Iceland in 1896 and came to the United States with his parents when he was four years old. He is a graduate in Arts and Law from the University of North Dakota and was State attorney for McHenry County for nine years. He was elected Attorney General in 1944 and served in that office for four years.

In 1931 Nels Johnson married Ruth Margery Hallenbeck at Grand Forks. They have two children, a son George M., a freshman in the University of North Dakota and Margot, at home, attending Bismarck High School.

The Icelandic Canadian extends congratulations to Associate Justice Johnson of the Supreme Court of N. Dakota. Its readers and in fact all people of Icelandic descent in the United States and Canada will watch the June primaries and the general election next fall with much more than usual interest. Tradition has it that Superior Court judges in the U.S. are usually re-elected. Judge Johnson's record is such that one can feel assured that tradition will not be broken this time. —W.J.L.

# ARNI SIGURDSSON

by PAMELA BAKER



Arni Sigurdsson

Employed with the Winnipeg Electric Company for the past fifteen years, Arni Sigurdsson is a modest, cheerful individual whose every thought and action expresses a youth in direct contrast to the impression conveyed by his snowy white hair and advanced years. An Icelander by birth and a naturalized Canadian by choice—he came to Canada 43 years ago—he has worked as a general painter practically all his life. But where most men concentrate their talents solely toward the business of making a living, Arni has successfully managed to redirect some of his abilities to pleasure filled hours where painting as a hobby provides him with complete relaxation and enjoyment.

In earlier years Arni had another hobby—amateur theatricals. Always keen to help his fellow countrymen he used to spend most of his spare time directing a number of Icelandic theatre groups in different parts of Canada. He translated many English

plays into his native tongue and also found time to write a history of the Icelandic theatre in Canada. A retiring man by nature, he would never admit to having done anything unusual or notable, but his fellow countrymen held a different view. They thought so highly of his distinguished work that in 1950 the President of Iceland created him a Knight of the Royal Order of the Falcon.

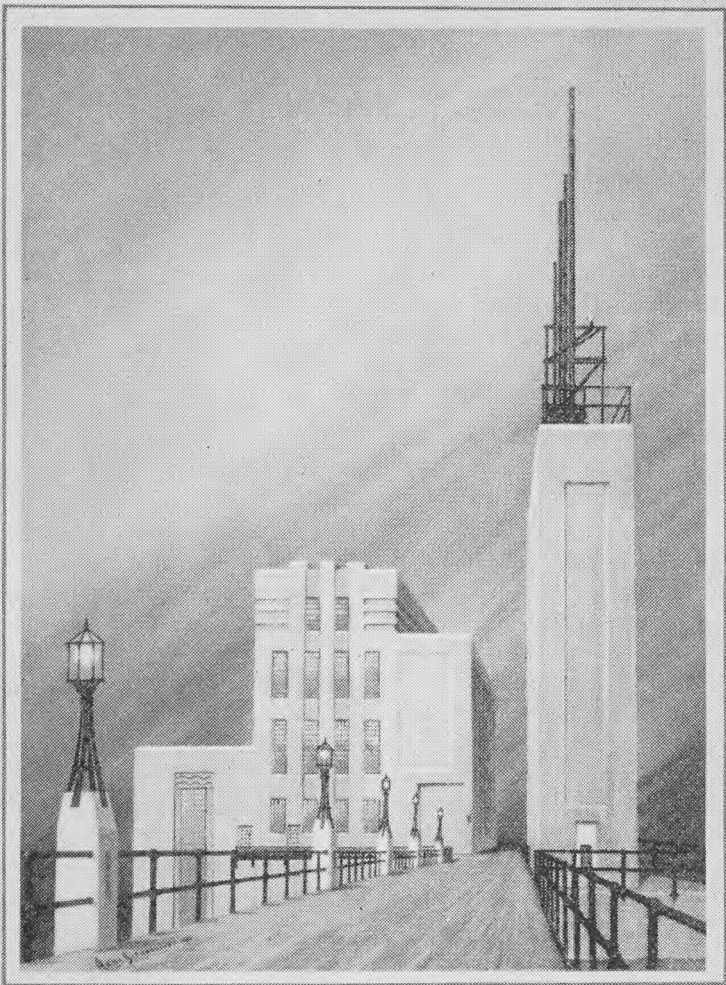
Of latter years Arni recognized the strenuous work of the theatre. However, he is not the sort of man who can just sit back and do nothing with his leisure hours. He decided to devote more time to painting—a hobby that had occupied him off and on for most of his life. With a deep-seated love of nature and all things beautiful, it is hardly surprising to find that Arni's paintings display rich and lavish colors together with a painstaking attention to detail. Who but a man with an inborn love of beauty and a sensitive eye for nature's varying moods could have painted such a picturesque snow scene as the one which hangs in his studio at the Seven Sisters Staff House? Or the water color—painted in different tones of blue—of the moon shining down on a glittering lake? Arni has no desire to place his work on commercial exhibit. He values them because more than anything else they evoke personal memories: a secluded waterfall, a pond, a patch of burnt-out forest now blossoming with renewed life.

Arni explains that very few of his paintings are completed on location. Since he only paints in his spare time, there is little opportunity to set up and arrange the complicated equip-

ment which every artist must carry. Whenever he comes across a scene which he wants to record permanently on canvas, out comes his paper and pencil and a quick sketch is created

the precise hues and combinations he must employ.

Asked if he has ever considered doing portrait painting, Arni admits that he has dabbled in it but is quick to



CATHEDRAL OF LIGHT

which is used to jog his memory when he returns to the easel in his studio at Seven Sisters. Fortunately he is possessed with a keen memory for color so it is not difficult for him to recollect

say: "I prefer landscapes. Nature will never come back at you like a portrait sitter can." And with a twinkle in his eye, he adds: "I often think that if nature could come back at some of

these modern painters they would get quite a surprise."

Although Arni has spent a great deal of his life in cities and towns, the countryside absorbs his major interests as an artist. The picture "Cathedral of Light", a view of the Seven Sisters power plant—is an exception to this rule. If one were to stand on the particular spot from which the painting was composed, one could see where Arni's interest in the photographic likeness of his subject ends and where his artist's imagination begins. For what may be discerned in this picture is not simply an impression of the sluiceway and powerhouse of a typical hydro-electric station, but the image of the main aisle, organ and lofts of an

impressive old-world cathedral. In full color, the sky in the background is highlighted by a vivid stained-glass effect.

The directors of The Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board and Winnipeg Electric Company considered this painting so interesting that they decided to use it on their 1953 Christmas cards. It is a fine example of the artistic flair of this gentlemanly Icelandic who only as a true artist could have brought such color and reverence to what might be normally accepted as just another stone building.

—Reprinted from PHASE, by authority of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board and the Winnipeg Electric Co.

See Icel. Can., Spring 1948. Page 45; Autumn 1950, Page 33.

## NEWS FROM THE LEIF EIRIKSSON CLUB

It has been a good season for the club, and some fine programmes have been enjoyed at the meetings this winter.

Mrs. Elene McL. Smith entertained the December meeting with a showing of colored slides which she took while in Europe. The pictures included some excellent views of interesting places in France, England, Scotland, and Iceland.

The January meeting was well attended, especially by newcomers to the club. A film on the eruption of Mt. Hecla was shown by Prof. Löve, whose commentary on the film made it interesting. Professor Finnbogi Guðmundsson showed a series of slides on the "trolls" of Iceland, the "trolls" being huge rock formations of lava resembling human faces. Prof. Guðmundsson delighted everyone with his humorous interpretations of the expressions and likenesses of the various faces in rock. This evening will not be forgotten for a long time to come.

The meeting in February was conducted by the Social Chairman as no business was discussed. Four films were shown, including the official Grey Cup film, and dancing followed.

Club members learned something about stars and planets in the Universe we live in when Mr. J. G. Johannsson spoke to the March meeting on Astronomy. It was an extremely interesting and informative discourse and greatly enjoyed by everyone.

It was decided at this meeting that no April meeting be held because of the examinations written at this time at the University.

The club is making tentative plans for a concert to be presented in some rural communities next fall. Preparations will be made by a concert committee in May and June. It is felt that there is a considerable amount of talent in the organization. As a result there should be no difficulty in making arrangements for an interesting evening.

David A. Swainson



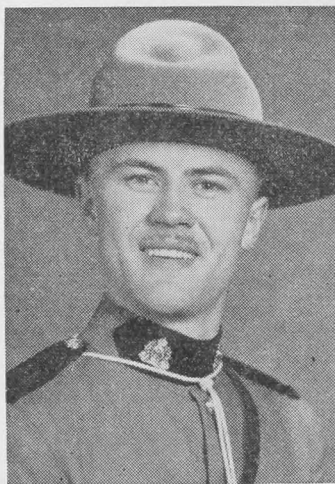
## BROTHER ACT

Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Van Norman have the unique distinction having three sons serving with the R.C.M.P.. Mr. Van Norman operated a farm at Decker, Manitoba prior to moving to Lloydminster, Alberta. Mrs. Van Norman was formerly Miss Jónína Thorarinsson of Reykjavík, Iceland



**Robert Malcolm Van Norman**

**Brian Kenneth Van Norman** — Joined the Force November 17, 1950. Presently serving at North Battleford, Sask.

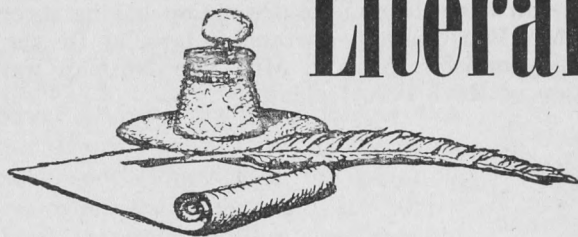


**Brian Kenneth Van Norman**



**Robert David Van Norman**

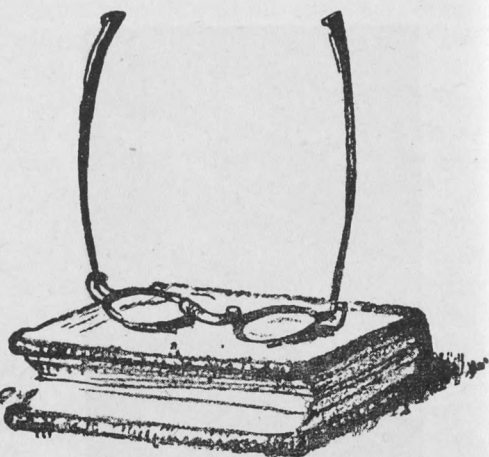
**Robert David Van Norman** — Joined the Force May, 22, 1947. Presently serving at Frobisher Bay, N. W. T. Awarded the Queen's Coronation Medal.



# Literary Contest

Since the days of Snorri's Heimskringla and the Eddas, Icelanders have taken great pride in their literary heritage. If that heritage is to be preserved on this side of the ocean, it must be done in the English language; and with this aim in view, the Icelandic Canadian Magazine is seeking literary contributions both in poetry and in prose. So come on, folks, show us that our literary tradition didn't die with our ancestors.

- Prizes: Short stories, \$25 and \$15; Poetry, \$15 and \$10.
- Short stories should not exceed 3,000 words. However, should a longer story of outstanding merit be received, an exception may be made.
- There is no limit to choice of material. Able and experienced judges will be selected, and their decision will be final. The Board reserves the right not to make an award in either contest.
- Members of our editorial staff are not eligible to enter the contest.



Send contributions to Axel Vopnfjord, 1267 Dominion St. Winnipeg, before May 1st, 1954

# PROFILES

reprint from the

COMOX DISTRICT FREE PRESS, Courtenay, British Columbia



**HALLDOR ERICKSON**

Fisherman-guide extraordinary, Halldor Erickson of Comox, only works at other jobs at the moment so he can go fishing when he wants to.

Spend a day with him in a row-boat and if you can get him to talk, you will come away with a share of his lore on fishing that has taken him the past 50 years to acquire.

There is even a deep tyee hole in the Comox Bay, that has become to be known as "Erickson's Hole", and he can tell you where the various types of salmon are at certain seasons of the year and even at certain times of the day.

But his love is for the tyee, "Give me the big ones," he says. "I like those tyee. Cohoes are not too bad, but those little blueblacks! Bah!"

Born 63 years ago in Manitoba, lean, grey-haired, nearly 6 foot tall, Halldor learned his fishing lore first on Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba.

In those days, he says, the fishing

was best in the winter time through the ice, and a tough job it must have been as he describes it.

It was an all-day job in weather that often was worse than 40 degrees below zero.

Even in the summer fishing was a hazardous business, using only sailboats to cover the lakes.

Mr. Erickson came to Campbell River in 1927 where he quickly secured an envious reputation as a fishing guide on the 'River.

"I had two brothers up there, older than I, and we were all guides at the time," he said.

"I like guiding people", he admits. "You meet the nicest sort of people. I could count on the fingers of one hand, the number of miserable ones you have to take out."

"The worst thing I hate, is taking somebody out and not catching any fish. I've even had them offer me extra money to catch them something. That makes me mad. I'd rather take less and get them a fish."

As he rows about on the job he likes the best, Mr. Erickson expands, and with his keen blue outdoorsman's eyes, takes in every change in the water or sky.

He can remember practically all of the parties he has taken out over the 20 or more years he has guided in the district.

He has little anecdotes to tell about each party, little tales of surprise or shock when the party hits a big one, or loses it.

"Bing Crosby", the last big name tourist he guided to fish, "was more tickled over the first little one he

caught than he was over the 45-pounder. Anyway, he took more pictures of that first one."

As is common amongst resort owners hereabouts, when they really want to impress any distinguished visitor they call on Halldor, the guide.

He chortles over the preparations made when Her Grace, The Duchess of Sutherland, wanted to go fishing and they called on Halldor to guide the party.

"They had a broadcasting system back on the yacht to tell them every little detail of how Her Grace was making out. Quite a deal."

Mr. Erickson guided for 10 years straight for the Elk Hotel in Comox and worked off and on at times for the Fort Lodge.

He has kept a record of his parties and their catches in a little black book and can refer to their likes and dislikes should he ever meet them again.

He has made guiding a big business in the district, and takes an immense amount of pride in knowing the fishing grounds and the habits of the salmon.

Not as active in guiding now as he was in former years, he will still take out parties when the occasion arises.

He is at present working with the Comox Logging company as a carpenter, and is all too often out on his favorite fishing grounds, the Comox Bay, early in the morning, if the tide is right, or weekends, learning something new about his erstwhile trade.

"Every fishing trip is different", he says as he will point out how the tide is running, or the boil of a school of herring, or as he turns the boat, "haul in your line, and clear the weeds off it."

Sure enough weeds will be on your spoon. "They always are," he says, "when you make that turn just off

the mouth of the river. Next time around we won't need to, because the tide's on the turn. We'd better get in a little closer to the bank, they swarm around there before they take off with the tide."

"Over there, by the wharf is where we catch the springs in late December, it's always good there. It's just a case of watching and knowing," he says, "but you can't always be sure. You have to know more than the fish, and that's pretty hard."

Halldor is a non-drinker, non-smoker and as he says, "has worked all his life outdoors," as is evident by lean sun-and wind-burned face and wrinkled eyes.

His excellent physical condition was evident as he steadily rowed his boat for some four hours, his eyes picking out landmarks ashore.

"I've done 15 hours straight every day, up at Campbell River," he claims, "you just keep at it. You don't think of the rowing, you're watching the lines. I like to give her a heave when we strike, so you got to keep your eyes open."

Mr. Erickson, happily, "settled down" in Comox with two young children, Malcolm 10, and Inga 16, both already ardent fishermen, lost his family and first wife during the 1918 'flu epidemic, here at Comox.

Edwin and Dora, brought here from Manitoba, are still around the district, and Edwin can take over from his dad and guide for his father if necessary.

The day we spent with Mr. Erickson saw the various boats out fishing in the Bay, watching his manoeuvres and following his every move across the water.

"It's quite alright", he said, when we drew it to his attention. "I had



that man out last week showing him the water around here. He's a good fisherman. Now if you come out here again, watch how I turn into the tide. That way you don't lose ground and are back again where you started.

"Turn the other way and the tide at this point will carry you 'way out and you'll have quite a time getting back."

He has his favorites in guiding, too, those who come back year after year and insist on Halldor taking them out.

One of them is Mr. Gibbs, a famous fishing spoon manufacturer from Vancouver. "He's a good joe," Halldor affirms, "but I like to try and catch a fish on a spoon that he doesn't make. Just for the fun of it. He's pretty good though."

Asking around the district about Halldor Erickson, we were met with

"Oh, the fishing guide. He's pretty good." Which in itself is a fairly good recommendation from a bunch of fishermen.

We also found out later from his wife and family that Halldor is an accomplished musician, playing the piano and violin. In fact in the earlier days in the district he was one of those rare creatures who could "call" and play violin, too, for the local dances.

There is so much in the background of Halldor Erickson, that much must be left out; his homesteading days in Manitoba, his work as a postmaster while farming, his work on his present garden, and the worry about the raspberries and the tomatoes and his constantly looking out towards the Bay to see who is fishing there.

A nice life!

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## Icelandic National League Convention

The Icelandic National League completed its thirty-fifth annual convention on Wednesday, February 24th, concluding three days of well attended interesting and entertaining meetings and concerts, under the chairmanship of its president, Rev. V. J. Eylands. Delegates attended from many Icelandic districts, including Mountain, N. Dakota, Selkirk, Lundar, Gimli, Morden, and Arborg. The delegate coming the greatest distance was Rev. Eiríkur Brynjólfsson from Vancouver, B. C. Among newcomers attending the meetings were Rev. Bragi Friðriksson, minister of the Lutheran church at Lundar, having arrived from Iceland last November, and Rev. Robert Jack, the "Scotch Icelander", minister of the Lutheran church at Arborg. An old friend, Rev. Theodore Sigurdson, also attended the meetings.

The usual routine of business, in-

cluding resolutions, discussion, pronouncements, and plans for the future, was followed. A committee was appointed to look into the matter of building an Icelandic memorial hall. A resolution was passed urging active support of the Icelandic papers, with the suggestion that they were the mainstay of the Icelandic community and strongest cohesive influence. An interesting innovation was introduced the first day of meetings when Prof. Finn-bogi Guðmundsson invited all out of town delegates and visitors to the University to inspect the Icelandic section of the library. He provided a bus for transportation. It was an enjoyable and a much appreciated gesture.

The evening entertainments were, as usual, the highlights of the meetings. The chapter "Frón" sponsored the first evening, in the First Lutheran Church, opening with an address by

its president, Jón Johnson. The outstanding feature of which was an address by the Rev. Theodore Sigurdson. The other items on the program were of uniform and outstanding excellence, including Lorna Stefansson, Pálmi Pálmason and Miss Lilja Eylands. The second evening, in the First Lutheran church, sponsored by the Icelandic Canadian Club, highlighted the Hon. Byron I. Johnson, M. B.E., former premier of B. C. He gave a lengthy and interesting statistical report on the province of British Columbia. He was introduced by Judge W. J. Lindal. Also featured were the Daniel McIntyre choir, John Graham, Robert Ryback, violinists, Stuart Neirmeir, Pianist, and Gordon Parker, baritone. The concluding evening, in the hands of the Icelandic League, constituted the closing meeting of the convention. It was held in the First Federated Church. The meeting was conducted by Prof. Finnogi Guðmundsson and although it was an outstand-

ing novelty to hear a Scotchman speak Icelandic, as the Rev. Robert Jack did both fluently and well, and though the Rev. Eiríkur Brynjólfsson spoke with his usual excellence, the show was stolen by four little girls from Arborg, reciting in Icelandic. They were Judy Vopnfjord, Rosalind Palsson, Jona Palsson and Erla Sæmundsson.

Honorary members were named at the final meeting, and were: the Rev. Einar Sturlaugsson of Patreksfjörður, in Iceland, and Dr. Stefán Einarsson of the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Md.

Officers elected were:

President	Rev. V. J. Eylands
Vice-Pres.	Rev. P. M. Petursson
Secretary	Mrs. Ingibjörg Jónsson
Vice-Sec.	Prof. F. Guðmundsson
Treasurer	Mr. G. L. Johannson
Vice-Treas.	Mr. Thor Viking
Financial Sec.	Mr. Guðm. Levy
Vice-Finan. Sec	Olafur Hallson
Archivist	Mr. Ragnar Stefansson

P.

## The Rules of Life of the Old Norse Religion

In his translation of *Norse Mythology* Dr. Rasmus B. Anderson includes many valuable comments by the highest authorities on the subject, who possessed thorough knowledge of the Icelandic Eddas, as well as the Norse Mythology, which explain the religion of the Northmen prior to their adoption of christianity. One of these authorities was Professor R. Keyser. The rules of life as indicated by the High Song of Odin (Hávamál, a poem of 1059 lines), and Sigdríf-

mál (a poem of 245 lines), was summed up by him as follows:

1. The recognition of the depravity of human nature, which calls for a struggle against our natural desires and forbearance toward the weakness of others.
2. Courage and faith both to bear decrees of the norms<sup>1</sup> and to fight against enemies.
3. The struggle for independence in life with regards to knowledge as well as to fortune; an indepen-

1. The three fates for Norse Mythology, Urður, Verðandi and Suld, past, present and future. They dwell under the ash-tree Yggdrasill by the Urðar-fount and sprinkle this world-tree with holy water from the fount to keep it sound and ever-green. They spin the threads of human destiny. Besides these three Norns, every human creature has a personal Norn or fate. Some are supposed to wield a good influence and others not so good.

dence which should, therefore, be earned by a love of learning and industry.

4. A strict adherence to oaths and promises.
5. Candor and fidelity as well as foresight in love, devotion to the tried friends, but dissimulation towards the false and war to the death against the implacable enemy.
6. Respect for old age.
7. Hospitality, liberality, and charity to the poor.
8. A prudent foresight in word and deed.
9. Temperance, not only in the gratification of the senses, but also in the exercise of power.
10. Contentment and cheerfulness.
11. Modesty and politeness in intercourse.
12. A desire to win the good will of our fellow men, especially to surround ourselves with a steadfast circle of devoted kinsmen and faithful friends.
13. A careful treatment of the bodies of the dead.

—Norse Mythology or  
Religion of our forefathers  
by Rasmus B. Anderson, L.L.D.

## LAURA GOODMAN SALVERSON WINS AWARD

It was announced in Toronto that Mrs. Laura Goodman Salverson has won the Ryerson Press Fiction award for 1954 for her novel "Immortal Rock". The award, a top prize of \$1,000.00

Mrs. Salverson has won several awards, one of them being the Governor General's award for the best fiction in 1937 with her novel "Dark Weaver."

Mrs. Salverson was the first editor

of The Icelandic Canadian, and was at one time president of the Winnipeg branch of the Canadian Authors' Association.

The Icelandic Canadian follows Mrs. Salverson's career with interest, and rejoices in her accomplishments.

★

## HEADS CITY OF WINNIPEG SCHOOL BOARD

At the first meeting of the Winnipeg School Board in January of this year Peter B. Curry was elected to be Chairman of the Board for the year 1954. Mr. Curry has served on the Board for several years. He is the son of Mrs. Bertha Curry, (née Sigurbjörg Danielsdóttir Laxdal) of San Diego, Cal., and the late Mr. Curry. They were former residents of Winnipeg.

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